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Hafa Adai!

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Larson eyes repayment plan for Yutu premium pay

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Former Department of Finance secretary Larissa Larson has admitted that she was not entitled to over $36,000 in typhoon premium pay that she was paid in January 2019 and has proposed that the Superior Court issue a judgment for her repayment.

In response to the lawsuit filed by Attorney General Edward Manibusan against Larson alleging illegal Typhoon Yutu overtime pay, Larson, through attorney Robert Torres, said she does not contest that she was not entitled to the alleged premium pay she had

See LARSON on Page 4

$2.29M questioned costs in PUA

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

An independent audit has determined that the CNMI is not in compliance with some requirements regarding the Unemployment Insurance Program of the U.S. Department of Labor and that questioned costs in the total amount of $2,292,260 exist.

See PUA on Page 4

Tinian lass is People's Choice winner in pageant

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Tinian lass Isa Ha'ani Long continues to represent the Marianas well, placing in the Top 16 as one of the semifinalists in the 2023 Miss Massachusetts Teen USA com-

See PAGEANT on Page 4

Tinian daughter Isa Ha'ani Long poses with the People's Choice award that she won at the 2023 Miss Massachusetts Teen USA last weekend in Burlington Massachusetts.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Garapan building goes up in flames

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

A structure fire completely burned the inside of an abandoned building in the heart of Garapan yesterday afternoon, and it remains unknown yet

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Two fire trucks on scene as well as dozens of firefighters respond to the structure fire at an abandoned building in the heart of Garapan yesterday afternoon.
KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

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True Colors was a huge success with standing-room only, sold-out performances and rave reviews.
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Missy Elliott and George Michael are some of the nominees to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.
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Local

LEIGH GASES

Attendees of the fiscal year 2023 Annual Planning Training and Integration Meeting, or APTIM, took a group photo at the Azucena Room of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan last Friday, Jan. 27, after they presented and discussed with the Guam-CNMI Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves State Committee the challenges and issues unique to U.S. Guardsmen and Reservists.

Aguigui: Another successful training session with ESGR

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The fiscal year 2023 Annual Planning Training and Integration Meeting, or APTIM, which was held with Reserve component leaders and the Guam-CNMI Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve State Committee was a success, according to Maj. Gen. Esther Aguigui, Adjutant General of the Guam Army National Guard.

"It was a great and very successful training session; and I know that CNMI is always a preferred site, just because we can get a lot of work done and we can work and we can play at the same time," she said in an interview with the media after the Guard adopted Commissioner Joaquin S. Tudela Community Park in San Vicente last Sunday.

The APTIM training and meeting took place at the Azucena Room of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan last Friday, Jan. 27 and presentations about each U.S. Reserve components were made.

Among those who spoke were U.S. Army Reserve Brig. Gen. Mark Siekman, commanding general for the 9th Mission Support Command; Col. David P. Santos, chief of staff of the Guam Army National Guard; LCDR Brian Matic, commanding officer of the U.S. Navy Reserve Center Guam; and U.S. Coast Guard Micronesia Forces Sector Guam Chief Warrant Officer 4, Wilfred Thomas.

In the training session, each Reserve component discussed and presented challenges to the ESGR committee, and each component "basically laid out their issues and con-

See ESGR on Page 4

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Muna asks for $3.48M for medical referral

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña has requested Gov. Arnold I. Palacios for an appropriation of $3,487,754 to ensure adequate funding for the medical referral program for the second quarter of fiscal year 2023.

In her letter to Palacios Tuesday, Muña said this projected need for $3.48 million "considers the end of the Medicaid Presumptive Eligibility on March 31, 2023, and the subsequent increase [in the number] of the uninsured and underinsured."

She said that, as CHCC approaches the end of the first month of the second quarter of fiscal year 2023 and pending any appropriation measure to fund the medical referral program, they are fast nearing the point of fully expending all funds for the program that were appropriated from the previous fiscal year.

Noting CHCC's report on health system network program quarterly costs, Muña said that CHCC had a cash carry-over of $2,998,647 at the beginning of fiscal year 2023 and those funds are expected to be fully expended by the end of January 2023.

She said they processed 718 referrals since fiscal year 2022, of which 32 are actively receiving services.

According to CHCC's health system network program quarterly costs, payroll for personnel cost amounts to $347,709; rental for transiting patients and escorts and for rooms is $1,123,196; airfare is $372,738; subsistence is $330,480; oncology drugs is $1,400,000; and all other expenses is $100,000, for a total projected quarterly cost of $3,674,123.

With a projected medical reimbursement of $186,369, this brings to $3,487,754 in projected quarterly need. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

MHS Glee Club showcases 'Wrapped' over the weekend

Displaying the young talents of their students, the Marianas High School's Rhythm N' Harmony glee club will be showcasing their "Wrapped" concert tonight and tomorrow night at 7pm, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

According to Mylan Goodwin, musical director of the Marianas High School's Rhythm N' Harmony, the talented team has made several appearances and performances islandwide, but this concert will be the first for the year 2023, and they have been preparing for it, with daily rehearsals lasting up to two hours long.

Goodwin is also directing "Wrapped" and is assisted by co-director Deejay Santomin. The showcase is produced by Friends of the Arts president Harold Easton.

Tickets for the show will be available for purchase at the venue's entrance or at MHS' room D102, at $5 for students and $10 for adults. Sponsorship packages are also available.

For more information, contact Goodwin at (670) 285-1704 or email mhsrhythmnharmony@gmail.com. ***(Chrystal Marino)***

Public warned of rip currents

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents until Tuesday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam, dangerous rip currents are present in east-facing reefs of the Marianas. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

The public is advised to stay out of the water along east facing reef lines. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

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PUA

From Page 1

In a report on Monday, auditing company Deloitte & Touche LLC said that questioned costs of $2,071,943 exist for noncompliance with eligibility program requirements, and questioned costs of $219,547 exist for noncompliance with allowable costs/cost principles requirements.

Deloitte also found $770 in questioned cost exists for noncompliance with the CNMI Department of Labor's Division of Employment Services' Standard Operating Policies and Procedures for Pandemic Unemployment Assistant and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Programs activities allowed or unallowed requirements.

These were among the many deficiencies that Deloitte outlined in its report, which was submitted Monday to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

The Office of the Public Auditor hired Deloitte to audit the financial statements of the Department of Public Lands major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the CNMI as of and for the year ending Sept. 30, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Deloitte was also engaged to audit the financial statements of government activities and each of the remaining major funds.

The findings of deficiencies and questioned costs with respect to Unemployment Insurance Program are in the Deloitte's report on the CNMI's compliance with each major federal program, report on internal control over compliance, and report on schedule of expenditures of federal awards required by the uniform guidance.

Deloitte said they identified certain deficiencies in internal control that they consider to be material weaknesses and significant deficiencies.

In response to the auditor's findings, acting Finance secretary Tracy B. Norita said that Finance will revisit the internal controls of each agency to ensure that it aligns with the compliance requirements and the CNMI's policies.

Norita added that the CNMI just recently launched its new financial system (Tyler Hub Munis) in October 2021, which is designed to monitor the proper process of each transaction based on CNMI policies and internal controls.

She said they will also ensure that all personnel handling the grants will be aware and knowledgeable of the overall compliance requirements for each federal award.

Norita said they will also ensure that a proper approval process will be in place to review the completeness and accuracy of the expenditures.

UI Programs are meant to provide temporary income assistance to qualified unemployed individuals and help stabilize the economy. The CNMI Department of Labor, as the administering agency, plays a fundamental role in ensuring the integrity of UIPs.

Deloitte said individuals are only entitled to benefits if they are no longer working (or their hours of work have been reduced) through no fault of their own and that individuals must be able and available to work. Claimants are eligible to receive a PUA and FPUC if they file an initial application and weekly certifications.

With respect to the $2,071,943 in questioned costs, Deloitte said the cause is that CNMI Labor did not monitor compliance with its Standard Operating Policies and Procedures for PUA and PFUC Programs and lacks a systematic filing of relevant documents over applicable eligibility program requirements.

Deloitte said a total of $2,049,172 in PUA and PFUC overpayments was reported during fiscal year 2020, which amount is questioned.

On the $219,547 questioned costs, the auditor said the cause is that the CNMI did not effectively monitor cumulative expenditures against the approved and authorized funding limits for each expenditure category.

Deloitte said the CNMI did not effectively utilize reports generated from the expert system (HireMarianas) to verify that all claims were properly assessed and processed.

The auditor said overtime expenditures were incurred without proper approval.

The auditor said certain program cumulative expenditures as of Sept. 30, 2020, exceeded the approved budget by expenditure category and indirect costs charged to certain grant awards were not included in the approved budget.

With respect to the $770 questioned costs, the auditor said this was because CNMI Labor did not properly document or certify employees who received UIP training and did not adequately support program transactions.

PAGEANT

From Page 1

petition and winning the People's Choice Award last weekend, in Burlington Massachusetts.

Long, who is a pre-medical student at Harvard University, later told *Saipan Tribune*, soon after receiving the award, that she was proud to have put Tinian and the Northern Marianas on the map.

"I feel very honored and grateful, especially for having a support system from back home. It was a great experience and I was very privileged to be able to represent my roots and my island," she said.

Among the many people she had met through the pageant, Long said that not many people knew of Tinian or the Marianas, so she enjoyed sharing her culture and shedding more light on her heritage. "It was nice to be able to explain my culture, traditions from back home, and just let more people know about the islands."

This wasn't the first competition Long was involved in. She also bagged several trophies during her previous participation in the 2022 California OCB Bay Area Amateur Bikini Bodybuilding Championships.

When asked how different the process was when competing in a bodybuilding competition versus a pageant, Long said, "This was my first pageant ever, which I didn't expect it to be as intense as it was. But I have competed in body building before. My first competition was prior to college. …They're two completely different ways of preparation, but I guess I had a feel of what it was like to be on a stage.

"Body building is definitely a lot more rigorous on the body…in terms of exercises and discipline and holding yourself accountable and it's a lot of work. And pageants are a lot of work too, but I feel like they're just completely different things. Body building [is] like building your muscles and growth in that sense; in pageants, it's more of like who you are as a person, what you advocate for—so it's just different ways of what they highlight in an individual."

She said the whole process "was a genuinely good experience…Initially, we'd meet on Friday, and then Saturday was prelims and then from there, the Top 15 would advance and I was grateful enough to have received a spot the Top 15 as well as the People's Choice. So that was amazing."

Long thanks all those who supported her throughout her journey. "*Si yu'us ma'ase* Marianas and all my friends and family who voted! ...None of this would've been close to possible without my amazing community. It's because of you that I was able to confidently represent my roots and everything I stand for. So incredibly honored to have had this opportunity to compete," she posted on her Facebook page.

Long's father also posted, "We wanted to thank everyone who supported Isa and her drive to become the Miss Teen Massachusetts People's Choice winner. Without the support of family, friends and islanders worldwide, we couldn't have done this."

A co-valedictorian alumni of Tinian High School, Long is currently a pre-med student at Harvard, and a certified personal trainer. She has a twin sister, Cielo.

LARSON

From Page 1

received.

"Ms. Larson submits that she does not contest and admits that she makes no claim to entitlement to the alleged 'Typhoon Premium Pay' amount of $36,775.43 paid to her on Jan. 7, 2019, by the authority of former CNMI governor Ralph DLG Torres," said Torres.

In addition, Torres said his client does not contest nor oppose an entry of judgment against her for the sum of $36,775 with credit for her surrendering her accrued annual leave in the amount of $9,200.58, which she claims she waived in March 2019, following her resignation as Finance secretary.

"The net amount of plaintiff Manibusan's claim against Ms. Larson, to which she submits and agrees to reduce judgment, is $27,578.85," he said.

Larson, through her attorney, agrees to payment on the judgment because she claims she has not been able to reach a stipulated agreement with Manibusan.

Larson proposes that she pay off the proposed judgment, if granted by the court, in the sum of $250 per month.

Meanwhile, with respect to Manibusan's claims for declaratory judgment against her, Larson argues that the Attorney General's claims should be directed to the Office of Personnel Management or the office of former governor Torres.

"Those persons issued the purported unauthorized compensation directives or executive orders at issue in this pending civil complaint. Even as secretary of finance, Larson issued no directives nor gave any authorization for payment of the 'Typhoon Premium Pay' which she admits she received," said Torres.

According to the 15-page lawsuit submitted to the Superior Court, Manibusan, in his official capacity as the attorney general of the Commonwealth, claims that the CNMI was harmed because of the authorized overtime pay received by Larson.

The OAG argues that Larson was not entitled to overtime and should be directed to return all the money she was paid in overtime.

According to the lawsuit, Larson's total compensation in fiscal years 2019 and 2020 exceeded her statutory salary of $70,000, which is against the law.

FLAMES

From Page 1

what started the blaze.

At around 1pm yesterday afternoon, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services responded to a structure fire at the former Mom's Round Two bar and grill.

At the scene, *Saipan Tribune* observed two fire trucks on scene responding to the fire as well as dozens of firefighters.

Saipan Tribune also observed the entire road from the Elegance Café down to Monster Pizza was closed off by police, causing heavy traffic in the area.

Meanwhile, firefighters worked to extinguish the fire while also ensuring it was cut off from nearby vegetation and structures. The fire died down in just a few minutes at around 1:40pm.

DFEMS has yet to issue an official report of the incident.

According to the man who called dispatch for assistance, the fire began after a known homeless man came walking out of the abandoned building.

DFEMS has yet to confirm whether the fire was intentional or if it was an accident.

The man who called dispatch told *Saipan Tribune* that he was at the nearby carwash when he noticed the known homeless man enter the abandoned building.

The witness stated that he immediately took out his phone to record a video. In the video that he showed fire investigators, the man he claims could have started the fire was seen leaving the building as flames started to erupt.

The witness stated that he immediately yelled at the suspect, who rapidly walked away once he noticed the man taking a video of him.

Another witness who works at a nearby establishment stated the homeless man is known to cause trouble in the village, but he has never heard of him committing crimes as serious as arson.

He stated he was startled when he started to smell smoke in his office, which led him to go outside to find out what was going on. When he came out, he was shocked to see that the abandoned building was in flames, and with dark, heavy smoke clouding the air.

He said he called 911 and was told someone had already called in the fire and that help was on the way.

ESGR

From Page 2

cerns that we have—and how they would be able to help us with some of the unique issues that only happen to Guard service members and Reservists," said Aguigui.

Schedules of planned training for Guardsmen and Reservists were also laid out for ESGR to be aware of when they are expected to leave and return.

Numbers and figures of each component were also presented, with several hundred soldiers and families within the U.S Army Reserves, about 14 or more in the Guam Army National Guard, three in the U.S. Coast Guard, and none so far in the U.S. Navy Reserves.

After the APTIM session, retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. and ESGR chair Rey Llaneta said that it was important for the face-to-face interaction with the commanders of each Reserve component so that the ESGR volunteers know who to contact in case of issues or questions arise. "It was very beneficial for us to have the commanders here."

"We're here to educate both the employers and the military members of what the law is because sometimes issues arise and ESGR gets in between them. We explain what they can and can't do and hopefully, it doesn't get to the point where it no longer is within ESGR and it becomes a court action. That's what we're trying to prevent," said Llaneta.

Others in attendance were retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Benny Paulino, who is the ESGR vice chairman; Norma Castillon, U.S. Army veteran and ESGR Guam volunteer; Dr. Rita Sablan, CNMI Committee area chair; Rose Igitol and Joshlyn Blas, employer outreach representatives for the CNMI; ESGR volunteer from Rota, Vince Calvo; Angel Vibar, ESGR volunteer support technician; 1Lt Justin Cabrera, ESGR military program coordinator; and training director Dina San Nicolas, as well as other ESGR volunteers and guests.

A day before this meeting, on Thursday, Jan. 26, a Lunch with the Boss event was held at the same location in which five employers were awarded the Patriot Award and an individual was awarded the Seven Seals Award.

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Author explores new cultural phenomena in 'Marianas Mosaic'

NMC
File photo shows Northern Marianas College faculty member Ajani Burrell.

In the recently released *A Marianas Mosaic: Signs and Shifts in Contemporary Island Life*, contributing author and editor Ajani Burrell talks about the rise in popularity of locally sourced apparel and the recent shift in neighborly behavior on the island of Rota.

A Marianas Mosaic was edited by Northern Marianas College faculty members Ajani Burrell and Kimberly Bunts-Anderson. The collection explores the many modes, forms, and voices of life in the Marianas today. It was published under NMC and the University of Guam Press' newly-established imprint Proa Publications, with support from the Northern Marianas Humanities Council.

In his first essay in the collection, *Repping the Marianas*, Burrell analyzes the logos, taglines, and marketing material from local clothing brands, as well as extensive interviews with brand creators and designers. His second piece, *May I Borrow Some Soy Sauce?*, describes how neighbors on Rota are increasingly less likely to ask one another for small favors and explores some possible reasons for this seemingly prevalent shift.

According to Burrell, both of his articles relied heavily on interviews, and arose out of a fundamental curiosity about specific cultural phenomena unfolding in the Marianas.

"I am thankful for the earnest cooperation of interviewees and the wider public," Burrell said.

Burrell believes that the establishment of Proa Publications is important and will help spur greater production of literary work in the Marianas.

"Local avenues to produce and distribute literature about the region are of vital importance," Burrell said. "They offer the greatest potential for ensuring local voices and perspectives are shared with the wider world in a fashion that befits the people and culture of the CNMI."

"Proa Publications also offers an easily accessible outlet for possible publication. As publications from the imprint become a more regular feature of the literary landscape, people will feel they too can achieve the goal of producing publishable work through exposure to similar such work by people they likely know or have a personal connection to. This can be a very powerful motivating force," Burrell added.

Proa Publications was established in February 2022 through a memorandum of understanding between the University of Guam Press and Northern Marianas College. Proa Publications expands publishing opportunities in the region and seeks to increase the body of accessible knowledge about Micronesia through high-quality publications.

The public is invited to learn more about the newly established imprint at the "Meet the Authors" and book-signing event at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023 at 1pm. The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will host the event.

Pre-orders for *A Marianas Mosaic* are available now for a special launch price of $35 at uogpress.com, and sales in all local bookstores will begin after the launch. For more information, contact Via De Fant at defantv@triton.uog.edu or (671) 735-2153. ***(NMC)***

Rotary guest highlights risk factors for heart attacks

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It used to be that smoking was the biggest risk factor for heart attacks, especially in the '70s, but that changed in the latter part of the '90s, when a new risk-factor emerged, called metabolic syndrome, that leads to adult-onset diabetes.

This was the highlight of a presentation Dr. Peter W. Gregor did to the Rotary Club of Saipan last Tuesday at their weekly meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Italian restaurant, Giovanni's. Gregor, who is a cardiologist at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and is a physician going on 50 years now, presented on the risk factor of heart attacks and the changing risk factors over four decades, with a focus on diet.

For some people, Gregor said, heart disease either is or is not in the genes. And as a general rule, he said, the Japanese do not get coronary artery disease—with one exception, the sumo wrestlers, whose diets are similar to that of an average American.

Coronary artery disease causes most heart attacks due to one or more of the heart arteries being blocked by plaques, which in turn narrows the arteries, reducing blood flow to the heart.

In the '70s, Gregor said, smoking was one of the major risk factors, but with the proliferation of no-smoking ads and the general success of the no-smoking campaign, "smoking as risk for coronary disease has receded considerably."

Then, in 1998, there was a new disease called metabolic syndrome. It's all the consequences of obesity rolled into one—hypertension, bad cholesterol, and pre-diabetes, which is a major risk factor for diabetes. These conditions increased the probability of coronary artery disease to 50%.

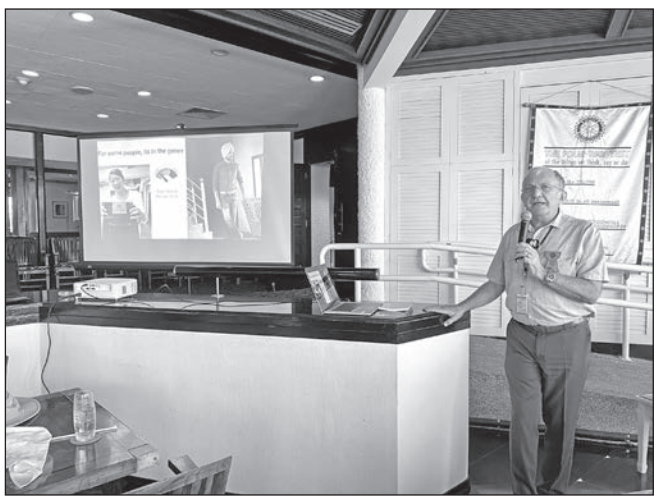
This disease, which leads to Type II diabetes, is accelerated by the high consumption of fructose, or high fructose corn syrup, which can be found in almost all foods today.

In Gregor's presentation, he said the intake of high-fructose corn syrup rose more than 10,000% per person from 1970 to 2005, paralleling skyrocketing rates of obesity. Fructose inhibits Leptin, the enzyme that says you're full. As a result, in the '70s, the average calorie intake was 2,100, but now, it's pretty close to 3,000 calories a day.

Now, 50% of Americans are borderline diabetic or full-blown diabetic, Gregor said. "Diabetes is a disease of arteries all over the body. Now, the complications of diabetes, it's a cardiovascular disease that when the arteries clog up, they're plugging up," he said, that's why diabetics can't feel cuts on their feet which leads to infections due to the hardening of arteries.

"When the diagnosis is finally made, there is a 50% chance of a plugged up coronary artery. Now that's a staggering statistic. And when a Type II diabetic goes on dialysis, the life expectancy is five years. So, diabetes is now absolutely the No. 1 cause of heart attacks and other cardiovascular diseases and diet is the major contributor to diabetes," he said.

After Gregor's presentation, he handed out a pamphlet of what high-fructose corn syrup is—which is essentially artificially derived from corn that can only be processed by the liver, what foods to avoid containing high-fructose corn syrup, and what foods do not contain it.



LEIGH GASES

Dr. Peter W. Gregor, a cardiologist at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. presents the risk factors of heart attacks, which include diabetes and a high diet of high-fructose corn syrup, during the Tuesday luncheon of the Rotary Club of Saipan at the Giovanni's restaurant of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Avoid all foods with fructose or corn syrup on labels. In addition to corn syrup, check food labels for maize syrup, glucose syrup, glucose/fructose syrup, tapioca syrup, dahlia syrup, fruit fructose, and crystalline fructose.

This includes regular sodas and juices, canned drinks, almost all of the cereals, breads, baked goods, mayonnaise, salad dressings, ketchups, and pancake syrups that come from the mainland U.S. Do not trust a label that says original. Trust a label that says the food is organic or gluten-free, he said.

Bacani brothers land on UT's President's List

ST. GEORGE, Utah—Utah Tech University students Vinson Bacani and his brother, Rovin Bacani, who are both from Saipan, have landed on the university's President's List honors for the fall 2022 semester.

The Bacani brothers join 1,280 other UT students, or 10% of the student body, earning President's List honors, signifying excellence in the classroom during the fall semester.

Inclusion on the President's List requires students to complete a minimum of 15 credits and achieve a GPA of 3.9 or higher.

"On behalf of the faculty and staff, congratulations to all Utah Tech students who made the 2022 fall semester honor roll list," said vice president of Academic Affairs and provost Michael Lacourse. "Your hard work and persistence have paid off and you should be proud of your achievement. Keep up the great work and we hope to see your name on the honor roll for the spring 2023 semester."

Utah Tech University is a premier open-enrollment teaching institution that offers more than 250 academic programs in the Western United States. ***(PR)***

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

SHAWN CURTIS HOLT Petitioner, vs. MERLY BACANI HOLT Respondent, : FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 22-0456 : SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on the file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is PMB 667 P.O. Box 10001 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts of filling.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 19th day of January, 2023.

/s/
Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
TWO EQUIPMENT STORAGE/RENTAL WAREHOUSE BUILDINGS
PROJECT NO. CPA-TA-001-23

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Design Services for the construction of two (2) equipment storage/rental warehouse buildings at the Tinian International Airport, Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project No. CPA-TA-001-23.

The project is being funded by CPA and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Sheri Llagas at receptionist@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements must be submitted to Ms. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Friday, January 27, 2023.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00p.m. CHST, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: January 4, 2023

CNMI UNIVERSITY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABLITITES AND CNMI COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The 2023 Champions of Equal Opportunity Awards Ceremony is sponsored by the CNMI-University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (CNMI-UCEDD) and the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities (CNMI DD Council).

Each year the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities (CNMI DD Council) along with our partners in the Disability Network are proud to bestow our "Champions of Equal Opportunity" (CEO) awards to self-advocates and advocates who have been nominated by members of their community from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. These awards are given to recognize individuals who share and promote our values of self-determination, independence, productivity, and inclusion.

This year, the CNMI DD Council along with our partners in the Disability Network will again recognize outstanding leaders as "Champions of Equal Opportunity." As part of our selection process, the Planning Committee is asking community members from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota to consider nominating a self-advocate(s) and advocate(s) from your islands who have done outstanding work to advance our goals. This year the awards ceremony is scheduled for March 1, 2023, after the proclamation ceremony. We hope that our recipients will be able to come in-person, but a virtual option is also in-place.

The time will be confirmed as we get closer to the event. We ask that all nominees be available to participate in our event either in person or virtually so that they may all be recognized during our event.

We invite you to nominate an individual with a developmental disability [self-advocate(s) and advocate(s)], residing in your respective islands, who personifies the ideals of self-determination, inclusion, and integration through legislative advocacy, public awareness/engagement, organizational leadership, or some combination thereof.

In addition, please scan and email to info@cnmicdd.gov.mp any supporting documentation such as certificates of appreciation, letters of commendation, awards, news articles or letters of support for each category that you have nominated an individual or entity to assist the committee with the selection process.

Google nomination forms need to be completed by February 15, 2023. If you have any questions, please email us at info@cnmicdd.gov.mp or call the Council at (670) 664-7000/3/5.

Rota Google Nomination Form or QR Code
https://forms.gle/k96KUP9ukeZ9yGBX9

Tinian Google Nomination Form or QR Code
https://forms.gle/5tXVcorid288FZbE9

Saipan Google Nomination Form or QR Code
https://forms.gle/FQdzdfTwCeXmVXra7

MCS Theatre Club presents original jukebox musical

Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club presented *True Colors*, an original jukebox musical, at the Pacific Islands Club Charley's Cabaret last Jan. 27 and 28. The musical, about a girl on the nonverbal end of the autism spectrum who tries to find her place and her voice in a new school, was a huge success with standing-room only, sold-out performances, rave reviews, and an audience that loved the show.

With incredible acting, signing, and dancing, the cast delivered amazing performances, and with an innovative production design, the crew set the stage for a one-of-a-kind production. So, it comes as no surprise that, as with many previous productions from the school's Theatre Club, everyone laughed, everyone cried, and everyone was inspired. ***(PR)***

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Brissa Concepcion Hunter, far left, as the show's main villain, Regina, joins the stage with her court of mean girls, from left to right, Karol, played by Maili Ilareyo'l Borja Peter, Kara, played by Moeisha Eleanor F. Cruz, and Karen, played by Kayannie Ilifighár Borja Peter

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Regina, played by Brissa Concepcion Hunter, front, leads her court of Mean Girls in singing 7 Rings.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

The show was directed by senior and Theatre Club veteran Kyla Monique B. Cabrera, who delivered the opening prologue.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Bernice Shane Sabino played the lead role of Iris with an incredible voice and an expressive face that helped communicate emotions for her nonverbal character. In this scene, the audience learns more about Iris's internal world as she sings A Million Dreams.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Bernice Shane Sabino, center, finds her place in the school's Theatre Club, led by Ally, played by Kinamarie M. Dela Cruz, second from right, and filled with colorful characters like Kyle, played by Brent Matthew Estacio Ortizo, far right, Kim, played by Jill Anne Mallari, far left, and Kin, played by Manuel Jacinto M. Pangelinan. Here, they comfort Iris by singing It's O together.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

The cast and crew take a bow after an amazing performance before a standing-room only, sold-out audience.

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS | OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM
JUAN A. SABLAN BUILDING | CALLER BOX 10007 | SAIPAN, MP 96950 | 670.664.2417 | INFO@HM.GOV.MP

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP23-GOV-42300039

2018 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island Standard State Mitigation Plan Update

Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) (collectively, "Commonwealth"), is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified consultants to update the 2018 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island (CNMI) Standard State Mitigation Plan (SSMP) in accordance with 44 CFR 201.4 and the requirements of the CNMI.

Proposal procedures shall comply with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, currently in effect, and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30-3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. Public Law 15-95 Local Preference Act, amended by Public Law 15-118, does not apply to this federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor, and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the CNMI.

The project package will be electronically available upon request to rlpangelinan@omb.gov.mp beginning February 03, 2023, or a hard copy may be picked up at the HMGP Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan. A pre-proposal meeting will be conducted via Zoom on February 28, 2023, at 10 am ChST. The link will be provided at a later date.

Questions regarding this project shall be addressed to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Office, Ms. Leona Deleon Guerrero, Program Manager, via email at ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp. Questions are due no later than 4:30 p.m., ChST, March 07, 2023.

The total proposal length shall not exceed 30 pages in length exclusive of appendices. A consultant that submits a proposal as a prime contractor cannot also submit as a subcontractor on another proposal. However, as a subcontractor, a company may be included in multiple proposals by different prime contractors.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

1.	Qualification of key personnel	25%
2.	Experience in Data Collection, Mapping, Planning and Design,	
3.	processing and producing GIS data	25%
4.	Familiarity with the project site and conditions	25%
5.	Project Approach & Schedule	15%
6.	Cost	10%

Performance time for completion of this project is 180 calendar days upon issuance of notice to proceed.

Discussions shall be conducted with the top 3 ranked contractors. After a selection is made, negotiations will be conducted with the highest qualified contractor to determine the final fair and reasonable price of the contract for the work to be performed. The successful proposer will be subjected to a responsibility and responsiveness determination in compliance with Section 3-301 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations.

Proposals must be sealed and marked RFP23-GOV-42300039 CNMI SSMP UPDATE. For proposers within the CNMI, one original and three (3) copies of the proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement Services, 1st Floor Horiguchi Building, Kopa Di Oru Street, Garapan, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST, March 14, 2023. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. The Director of Procurement Services must receive notices of intent to propose no later than 10:00 a.m., ChST, and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to g.cruz@dof.gov.mp.

For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and three (3) copies of the sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than March 14, 2023, and mailed to the Director of Procurement Services P.O. Box 510008 CK, Saipan MP 96950 and the proposal documents must be received no later than March 23, 2023. Failure to submit the required number of copies of the proposal may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfection in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so would be in the best interests of the CNMI government. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Patrick C. Guerrero
Governor's Authorized Representative

Geraldine T. Cruz, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement Services

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Brissa Concepcion Hunter plays the show's main villain, Regina, who bullies Iris and others along with her court of Mean Girls. Here, she sings 7 Rings.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Iris, played by Bernice Shane Sabino, left, meets her love interest in the show, Luke, played by Eunkyu "Joey" Hong, as they sing Rewrite the Stars.

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

Play director Kyla Monique B. Cabrera, center, poses with the show's writer and producer, Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D., right, and his wife, Velma Deleon Guerrero

ROMMEL BUENAFLOR

The lead cast members of the show gather with their director after curtain call. Front row: Bernice Shane Sabino, right, as Iris, Eunkyu "Joey" Hong as Luke, and Jill Anne Mallari as Kim. Second row, from left to right: Manuel Jacinto M. Pangelinan as Kin, Brent Matthew Estacio Ortizo as Kyle, Kinamarie M. Dela Cruz as Ally, director Kyla Monique B. Cabrera, Brissa Concepcion Hunter as Regina, Kayannie Ilifighár Borja Peter as Karen, Moeisha Eleanor F. Cruz as Kara, and Maili Ilareyo'l Borja Peter as Karol.

UOG looks to facilitate mango research, improve production

A 30-year-old mango tree orchard on the University of Guam's Ija Research & Education Center and two newly published guidebooks are ready for people who want to help improve mango production in Guam.

Despite the fruit's popularity among residents and farmers' interest in growing more of it, mango production in the last agricultural census was reported from only 700 of the more than 200,000 mango trees on island.

Yields are often erratic and unsuccessful, constrained by climate, disease, and a lack of varieties that do well in these conditions.

Planted throughout the 1990s, the Ija orchard now contains 29 varieties of mango that include some of the most successful commercial varieties in the world, such as Haden and Carabao.

With the orchard recently trimmed to a more accessible height, it will be easier to utilize for research, providing knowledge about mango varieties that are best adapted to Guam's climate and are resistant to or tolerant of fungal diseases.

Additionally, the orchard can improve the availability on island of the more desirable varieties of mangoes. "Most mangoes on Guam are 'boonie dogs,'" said Bob Bevacqua, a horticulturist at UOG who authored the new guidebooks. "They're mixed heritage—uncertain DNA."

In about a year's time after its new growth, the orchard can be a source of budwood for farmers and nurserymen. Grafting budwood from a desired variety onto a rootstock of another tree will produce true-to-type mangoes.

Procuring budwood locally would also be cheaper and safer than importing materials, which must undergo strict inspection as they commonly have pests and plant diseases, according to state entomologist Chris Rosario with the Biosecurity Division of the Guam Department of Agriculture.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

From left, Kaya Taitano, research assistant; Adrian Ares, interim associate director; Bob Bevacqua, horticulturist; and Jonae Sayama, graduate research assistant, all with the Western Pacific Tropical Research Center at the University of Guam.

Published this month, the *Mango Varieties at Ija Research & Education Center* booklet, authored by Bevacqua, Kaya Taitano, and Adrian Ares, details the seed types, characteristics, and principal disease threat of each mango at the research station.

The second publication, *Mango Production Guide for Guam*, authored by Bevacqua, Jonae Sayama, and Ares, outlines the best practices for producing mangoes sustainably.

Both guides, along with a *Mango Tree Care on Guam* publication from 2016, are available for download at www.uog.edu/wptrc/technical-reports. Hard copies are available from the Western Pacific Tropical Research Center by calling (671) 735-2060. ***(UOG)***

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

The mango orchard at the University of Guam's Ija Research & Education Center can be a source of plant materials for researchers and a source of bud wood for local farmers and nurserymen, which would allow them to graft and grow trees with desirable fruit qualities.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
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www.mymarianas.com
The Marianas

REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.** at the **MVA Conference Room**.

MEETING AGENDA

1) **Preliminary Matters**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes
      i. Regular Board Meeting – December 23, 2022
      ii. Special Board Meeting – January 24, 2023
2) **Public Comments**
3) **Committee Reports**
   a. Finance Committee
      i. Fund Status
      ii. Reprogramming of Funds
      iii. Release of Reserved Funds for Operations
   b. Tourism Resumption Investment Plan (TRIP)
      i. Japan
      ii. Korea
4) **Old Business**
   a. MVA Website Renewal
   b. Funding Request
      i. Tinian Hot Pepper Festival 2023
      ii. Rota Mayor's Sponsorship
   c. MVA Office Space
   d. Acquisition of Riding Mower for MVA Tinian
5) **New Business**
   a. FY23 Marketing Plans for Japan Market
   b. Memorandum of Understanding – Tour Guide Certification Program
   c. Destination Enhancement
      i. Supply and Installation of Chain-Link Fencing at Banzai Cliff
      ii. Beautify My Marianas Program
   d. NMC Sponsorship Request
6) **Executive Session**
7) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
   a. Next Regular Board Meeting
   b. Others
8) **Adjournment**

/s/ Gloria Cavanagh
Acting Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: ANTHONY MENDIOLA CAMACHO, aka: "Tonnei." Decedent. : Civil Action No. 16-0094 : ORDER SETTING TIME TO HEAR CLAIMS OF HEIRSHIP AND DEADLINE FOR FILING CLAIMS OF HEIRSHIP : Date: February 27, 2023 Time: 1:30 p.m. Judge: Kenneth L. Govendo

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Court in the above-captioned probate matter will hear all heirship claims from any interested parties/potential heirs to the Estate of Anthony Mendiola Camacho, aka "Tonnei" on **February 27, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.** at the Guma Hustisia, Imwal Aweewe, House of Justice, in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The deadline for filing a claim of heirship in the above-captioned probate matter is **February 26, 2023.** This notice shall be published three times in two newspapers of general circulation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SO ORDERED this 28th day of December 2022.

/s/_____
Kenneth L. Govendo, Associate Judge

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-23-014

ISLAND WIDE ROAD RESTORATION, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Island Wide Road Restoration, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity work consists of excavation, placing of flowable fill and asphalt to restore pavement areas cut by CUC to repair waterlines, sewerlines and customers' water service connections. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC and DPW. The duration of the contract is one year (365 calendar days) from date of award with an option to extend for an additional year if exercised by CUC.

The Bid Package will be emailed, upon receipt of a non-refundable payment from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable), after registration at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **February 6, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Seven (7) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-23-014, Island Wide Road Restoration"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 28, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other security acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 10, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Yvonne C. Ogumoro Acting Water & Wastewater Division Manager – via email yvonne.ogumoro@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 24

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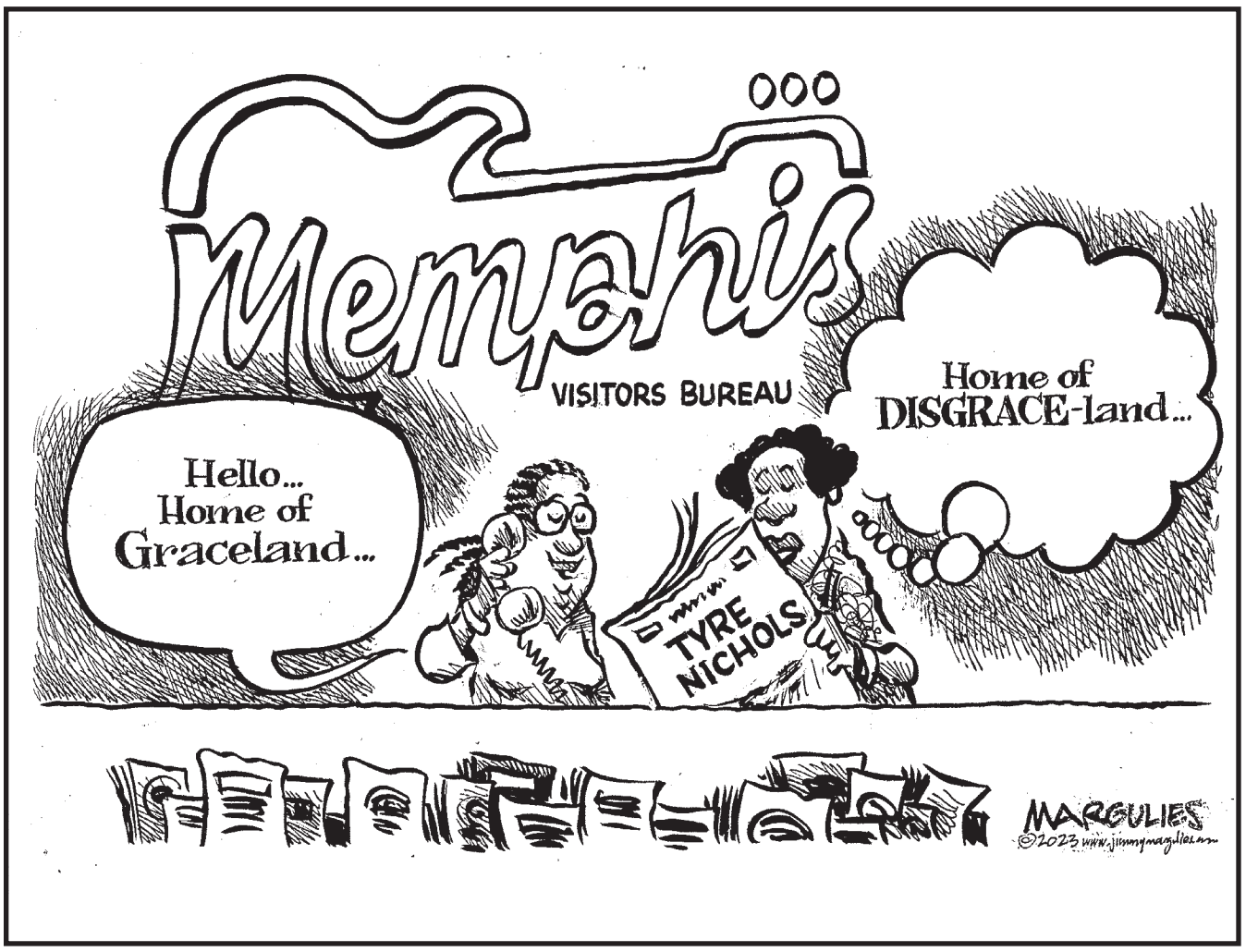

EDITORIAL

Santos' serial falsehoods merit impeachment

Santos

There are lies and liars and then there's George Santos.

Last week, news broke that the Justice Department wants the Federal Election Commission to delay taking action against the New York Republican. The congressman has faced mounting criticism and legal woes for his serial falsehoods. The FEC, which is a civil agency, has been scrutinizing his campaign finance paperwork. This news indicates the Justice Department is conducting a criminal probe.

Normally, newly elected members of Congress don't make much of an impression. But Rep. Santos is national news because he seems to be allergic to the truth in a way that makes even veteran politicians blush.

Shortly after his November victory, his biography began falling apart. He claimed previous employment at Goldman Sachs and Citigroup. He highlighted degrees from New York University and Baruch College. But in mid-December, The New York Times reported that none of those organizations had a record of him. Rep. Santos then admitted "résumé embellishment" but insisted there wasn't anything more to the story. "I'm not a criminal who defrauded the entire country and made up the fictional character and ran for Congress," he said an interview with WABC.

But a fictional character seems to be the only way to describe Rep. Santos' representation of himself. He said his mother was in the South Tower on 9/11 and died a few years later. She didn't pass away until 2016. He claimed he had Jewish grandparents from Ukraine who fled persecution during World War II. Evidence now shows those grandparents were born in Brazil and were likely Catholic. It seems he created a backstory that would help him win election by ignoring the truth.

Rep. Santos ran as an openly gay Republican. The Daily Beast reported that he appeared to have divorced a woman in 2019. Just days later, he launched an ultimately unsuccessful bid for office in 2020. A disabled veteran accused Rep. Santos of running off with $3,000 that was raised to save his dying dog.

Oh, there's more. The Security and Exchange Commission is interested in his role in Harbor City Capital, which the SEC previously accused of being a "classic Ponzi scheme." The FEC is curious about the source of a $700,000 loan Rep. Santos made to his campaign.

Republicans have a narrow margin in the lower chamber and don't want to lose even a single vote. But standing up for integrity would be the right thing to do. Rep. Santos's alternative reality extends well beyond typical political embellishment. Congress may not have many standards when it comes to honesty, but it should have some.

Expulsion or impeachment are exceedingly rare. But Speaker Kevin McCarthy should make clear they are on the table if Rep. Santos refuses to resign.

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Ocean Elder

MY GLASS CUP

BY JIM RAYPHAND
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jim Rayphand is a former executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc. and recently ventured into a startup fishing business.

For purposes of HOPE (Healthy Oceans & People Empowerment), a mentoring program that serves as a bridge between traditional culture and modern conservation science by incorporating local ocean knowledge with a Western science curriculum, I was asked to serve in the capacity of "Ocean Elder." The mere mention here of having been bestowed such a title gives me an uneasy feeling: "Ocean Elder," I say to myself silently over and over again. Yes, I have been over-thinking it like I do most things—I do understand that it is simply a categorization within a grant program and I think the creators of the program were wise in their choice of names for the grouping. The thing is that there is a natural hierarchy and spiritual aspect for islanders in our relationship with elders, of course, but also with the ocean, which I do not fully understand and am reluctant to insert myself as some sort of expert—I, unequivocally, am no such thing. So I hesitated, but eventually accepted the request out of my cultural sense of obligation not to deny my niece (by way of my extended island family) who asked me.

It's not that I have a problem with being "old," mind you; in fact, I embrace getting older and am most comfortable living behind a mask of an overgrown white beard to look the part. Still, looking the part and being it are not one in the same—I simply am not old enough in years to be an elder and am much less wise or knowledgeable enough to be an "Ocean Elder," regardless of whether or not I identify as one. It felt disingenuous to a certain degree and, more importantly, it made me think I was being somewhat *"namaiki"* (meaning disrespectful or putting myself too high up) to accept the role, but then it occurred to me that those feelings of inadequacy or of not being worthy are directly rooted in my cultural sense of respect for the tried-and-true elders of the ocean (many of whom I grew up admiring and most of whom have already passed on). I had the good fortune of spending much of my early years on or around the ocean in the company of men and women who sustained us solely through their knowledge of our ocean and our lands therein. We lived on our home island of Lukunor, a small atoll in the Mortlock islands without the modern-day amenities of grocery stores, electricity, or running water and relied on the ocean for food. Perhaps what I can bring to this role are tidbits of memories in the form of stories about the people and life from those days or maybe I can help to foster a sense of respect among the participating youth for our ocean and the true elders therein (past and present). If I don't honor their memory, then who will?

A quick observation about the difference between then and now: When I was young we needed the ocean to survive, but today it seems the ocean needs us in order for it to survive.

This project—by way of an educational collaboration between PSS sixth-graders, NMC ENRO college students, and community elders—offers hope (as the project acronym so aptly states) that future generations will know their part in preserving what ultimately is an islander's greatest resource for life. Funded by a grant from the Administration of Native Americans, Project HOPE is a free ocean science program uniquely tailored to the needs of Public School sixth-graders. In the long term, this initiative aims to foster interest in conservation careers among CNMI youth with the ultimate goal of developing more local ocean and marine science professionals (https://www.friendsmarianatrench.org/programs-projects/project-hope/).

During my orientation to be a part of this project, one of the other Ocean Elders (an actual elder and coincidentally a college schoolmate of my 81-year-old father) spoke briefly about traditional conservation practices in Palau having been passed down through generations, making the point that ocean conservation is not new. Even though some of the specific ways we go about it today may not be exactly the same as it started, the purpose remains rooted in protecting our oceans and the vast variety of life therein. There are varying schools of thought on ocean conservation between different types of people, of course. Some believe in conserving marine life today for a bigger yield tomorrow—these are those who view the ocean as a resource for life, more in line with traditional practices for subsistence fishermen of old and commercial fishermen today. Others want to conserve for the sake of conserving—these are the hopeless romantics who see value in untouched beauty and nature's wildlife for spiritual renewal. The truth is that islander customs, practices and general belief systems related to our oceans have elements of both the practical and spiritual—a kind of symbiotic relationship whereby one should exist without the other.

My favorite uncle growing up on Lukunor—my Dad's cousin, Tailen—and was known to be an incredible fisherman. He was

See OCEAN on Page 11

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An appreciation message

By GALVIN DELEON GUERRERO, EDD
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Northern Marianas College president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D. is the Mount Carmel School Theatre Club adviser and is the writer and producer of the club's latest production, True Colors.

As a lifelong educator, I have always believed that there is incredible power in helping students find their place in this world and find their voice amidst all the noise of life. That is exactly what Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club did with the phenomenal hit show, *True Colors*. The show was a huge success with standing-room only, sold-out performances, rave reviews, and an audience that loved the show. With incredible acting, signing, and dancing, the cast delivered amazing performances, and with an innovative production design, the crew set the stage for a one-of-a-kind production. So, it comes as no surprise that, as with many previous productions from the school's Theatre Club, everyone laughed, everyone cried, and everyone was inspired. It was truly a fitting way to celebrate diversity, promote equity, and ensure inclusion for everyone in our community.

Given the show's huge success, I felt it would be important to thank and recognize the many people and organizations that contributed, in one way or another, to the production.

First, as we always do at Mount Carmel School, we thank Almighty God for gracing us all with the spirit to have told this important story. We also thank Bishop Ryan Jimenez, +Bishop Emeritus Tomas Camacho, Mount Carmel School's board of directors, Mount Carmel School administrators, faculty, and staff, AlumKnights and the Mount Carmel School family, and audience members for supporting our Theatre Club and the show. In a special way, we also thank the parents of cast and crew members for their untiring support and for lending us their talented children.

Second, a number of businesses, organizations, and individuals contributed to specific aspects of the show. We thank Eileen Babauta, the director for the CNMI's University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and disability self-advocates from the CNMI's Consumer Advisory Committee, who worked with our students to help them learn more about creating a more inclusive and accessible atmosphere for everyone. We also thank Ann Zapata, Dominic Travilla, and everyone at Pacific Islands Club who ensured that the venue was accommodating for our show. Rico Pabalan and his team Soundhire, as always, made sure the singing and music sounded perfect. The following individuals and companies also contributed to key elements of the show: Audreyann Flores-Albuen, Sofia's Dress Shop, Shawn Camacho and Tropical Instant Press, Rob Travilla and TRIBE MARIANAS, Ed Calvo and Island Apparel, and Northern Marianas College. The following media outlets also helped with news coverage of the show: Gary Sword, Rosemond Santos Sword, Gordon Marciano, and KKMP, Sally Limes and KSPN2 News, Zaldy Dandan, Hazel Nichole Sadian, and *Marianas Variety*, Jayvee Vallejera and *Saipan Tribune*, and Rommel Buenaflor and the *North Star*. We also thank the CNMI Department of Community & Cultural Affairs, the Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts for their support.

Third, in a special way, I want to thank my co-advisers, my former students, and Theatre Club AlumKnights Victoria Deleon Guerrero and Zeno Deleon Guerrero. With nicknames like "V," "Z," and "G," students call us the Single-Letter Mentors. I, myself, prefer to think of us as the club's Lion Warriors who fight tooth and nail to help and support our phenomenal students. Victoria and Zeno have done so much to elevate the professional quality of our work and bring the Theatre Club to another level. Thank you "V" and "Z" for coming back home to give back to our precious club.

Fourth, last, but definitely not the least, we thank our amazing cast and crew members for shining on and off stage as true dramatic professionals. While the list of the cast and crew members is long, it is worth recognizing every single person for the talent, creativity, and passion that they invested into the show.

CREW

- Director: Kyla Monique B. Cabrera
- Vocal director: Amber Mendiola Romolor
- Choreographers: Donnie James Jr. Calma Militante, Seungeun Ha, and Jill Anne Mallari
- Stage manager: Chealzka Navarro
- Assistant stage manager: Jessiana Borja Tenorio
- Floor manager: Nicole Erin Pineda Mariano
- Set designer: Claire Regina Kautz
- Assistant set designer: Laizza Mallari
- Costume designer: Jazmyn Phoeme Del Rosario Lopez
- Assistant costume designer: Raeka Shereen A. Lantin
- Props master: Ashley Jo Sablan
- Assistant props master: Elisa Blanco
- Tech master: Leyonne Tolentino
- Set crew: Juno Dela Cruz, Quimari Liwerscheng Duenas, Mauri Ann Riney Fenis, and Aryana Taimanao
- Costumes crew: Francine Monique F. Albuen, Gerald John Inos Deleon Guerrero Jr., Nyla Jordan N. Deleon Guerrero, Ayanna Faith Matsumoto, and Leunyce B. Regalado
- Props crew: Jasyleen Arriola, Lwinalynn Delacruz Atalig. Krissy Cepeda, Kayla Rose Larson, Remiegem Melchor, Layla Palacios, Jadine Pangelinan, Maria Yoshie Torres, and Jhazmyn Nhicole C. Valiente
- Make up/hair: Jada Chang, Chelsy Anne Palacios Reyes, Aubriana Sablan, and Malina Rose Bermudes Tenorio
- Floor crew: Jose John Iglesias Mafnas, Devin Propst, Jared Terlaje, and Arturo Travilla
- Tech crew: Oscar Bien R. Buenaflor, Xinwen Jin, Mingi Jung, and Quince Emanuele Olanda Tizon
- Business manager: Jennifer Mallari
- Ushers: Quimari Liwerscheng Duenas, Mauri Ann Riney Fenis, Nevaeh Taisacan, and Mia Yobei

CAST

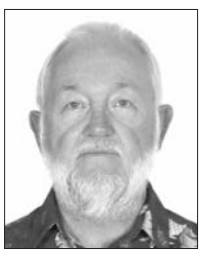
- Iris: Bernice Shane Sabino
- Luke: Eunkyu "Joey" Hong
- The Thespie Besties
- Ally: Kinamarie M. Dela Cruz
- Kyle: Brent Matthew Estacio Ortizo
- Kim: Jill Anne Mallari
- Kin: Manuel Jacinto M. Pangelinan
- The Court
- Regina: Brissa Concepcion Hunter
- Karen: Kayannie Ilifighár Borja Peter
- Kara: Moeisha Eleanor F. Cruz
- Karol: Maili Ilareyo'l Borja Peter
- Ensemble
- Wayne Dominic Año
- Carly Kate Dela Cruz
- Heleyna C. Dela Santa
- Carlo Crisdeo H. Diaz
- Patricia Denielle Guillo
- Seungeun Ha
- Clint Irang
- Justin Mallari
- Ayanna Faith Matsumoto
- Donnie James Jr. Calma Militante
- Therese Joy O. Ogo
- Tricia Juni Palacios
- Frannie Ramon
- Mathew Adrian A. Sablan
- Gavril Myles Santiago
- Peige Morgan N. Tomokane

Every single one of these cast and crew members did their part to bring the beauty of *True Colors* to the stage and to our community. They are all to be commended for giving their heart and soul to the show.

Above all, I appreciate Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club. This club endured throughout the pandemic, never once missing a beat by presenting four new productions during that time: *We Drank Our Tears: The Stories of Visitacion, Henry, and Dave* in February 2021, William Shakespeare's *As You Like It* in May 2021, *Zero2Hero* in May 2021, and *The Sound of Music* in January 2022, all to sold-out audiences. They were able to do this because the club is more than just a club: it's a family, one that is near and dear to my heart and the hearts of everyone in our family. Indeed, this is where my true colors can shine, alongside the beautiful spectrum of colors of other storytellers, which is simply "beautiful…like a rainbow."

Sonnet for the Saint of Prevarication

LITERARY NOOK
By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

U.S. House of Representatives George Santos
sworn in, his last name in Spanish means 'Saint'
with all the lies he has told he's not close
and everyone agrees that a Saint he ain't
he lied about his grandparents and origin
lied about college, never attended situation
lied about properties owned and his religion
he may be named the Saint of Prevarication
he could become the patron Saint of Liars
45 may build a tower dedicated to Deceit
and Santos worshipped by Election Deniers
McCarthy will pay for his lies without receipt
Remember when Republican talk about
Obama's birth certificate was all you heard
of George Santos lies they've not said a word.

OCEAN

From page 10

small in stature, but if ever there was an incarnation of what it means to have the heart of a lion he would be it—generally unafraid of anything or anyone. Whereas most fishermen bring home their biggest catch for food, show and/or trade, he was well-known for making a point to eat the biggest catch of the day on the boat or on shore before returning home as a kind of sacrifice to the spirits of the ocean. "Angai ena e likap pwe sipwe apwapwai naosh anu set" (loosely translated: "Take the biggest on so we can make the ocean spirits happy"), he would proudly proclaim. He was also a bit of a show-off and liked people talking about the sizes of fish he wouldn't bring home—I'm pretty sure my 10-year-old son (despite never having met him) gets that boastful trait from him. My Uncle Tai passed away about a year ago now…God rest him.

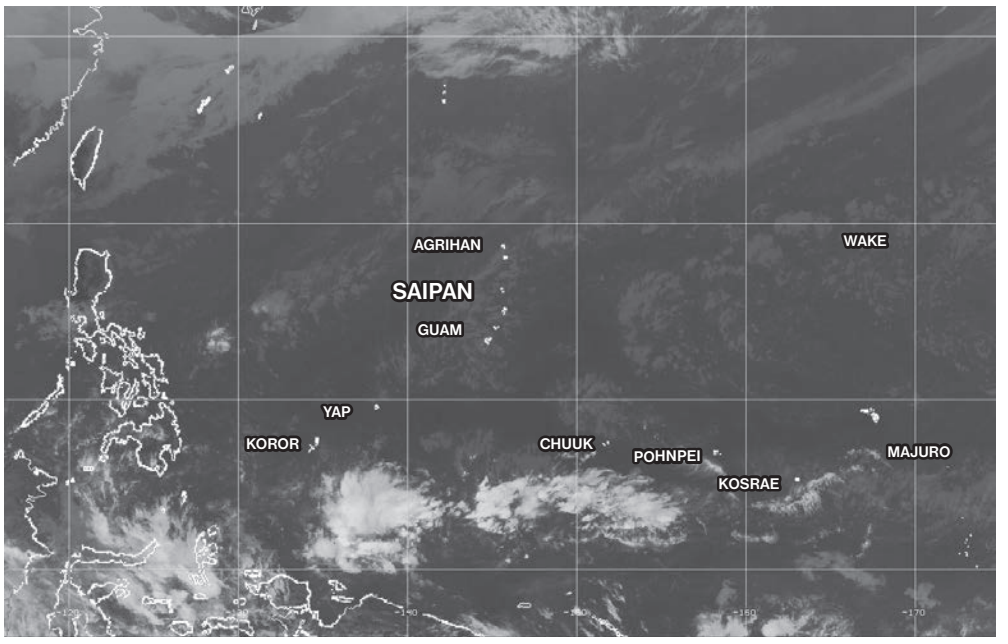
Some of the most traumatic events in my life (some of which I can see like a scented video in my memory) took place in or on the ocean. Equally vivid are the colorful images of underwater life such it was for me as a kid living on an isolated atoll in '70s and '80s—colors beyond even what the imagination could see. I simply could never have imagined dead reefs and such sparse fish supplies like I see around Saipan today and that some, if not all of it, is due to human carelessness is a little much to take. I am grateful for Friends of the Marianas Trench and Project HOPE for their part in doing something about it (and for letting me have a small part with them).

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
86º 76º	86º 76º	84º 77º	87º 77º	87º 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:55 AM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery shows mostly cloudy skies, with radar detecting mostly light to moderate showers starting to enter the eastern waters of the Marianas this morning. Buoys are reporting sear around 8 to 10 feet and this matches well with altimetry.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Sunny	86° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 77°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:15 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Monday	6:45 AM	6:17 PM
Tuesday	6:44 AM	6:17 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:48 AM	4:08 PM
Saturday	-	5:37 AM	5:00 PM
Sunday	-	6:22 AM	5:52 PM
Monday	-	7:04 AM	6:43 PM
Tuesday	-	7:43 AM	7:31 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Thunderstorms	75° / 68°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	45° / 22°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	67° / 61°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 71°
London	Showers	39° / 34°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	70° / 49°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	89° / 76°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 59°
Miami	Sunny	70° / 55°
New York	Partly Cloudy	43° / 25°
Osaka	Cloudy	46° / 33°
Paris	Showers	52° / 45°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 43°
Rome	Rain	59° / 50°
Salem	Sunny	56° / 38°
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 46°
Seoul	Sunny	27° / 14°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	46° / 34°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	46° / 34°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
12:29 AM	Low Tide	-0.32
7:56 AM	High Tide	1.54
1:05 PM	Low Tide	1.09
5:33 PM	High Tide	1.51

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
TW9308	3:50AM	7:20AM	1, 4, 5, 7
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	9:20PM	2:50AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.	

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.	

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The master resurfaces at Takumi

MARK RABAGO
Takumi Restaurant chef Takeshi Suzuki at work in Takumi Restaurant's kitchen.

MARK RABAGO
Takumi Restaurant is located at the Coffee Tree Mall at the back of ABC Store in the former Paseo De Marianas in Garapan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Takumi Restaurant's pork cutlet curry.

There's a new Japanese restaurant on Saipan and it's helmed by none other than famed chef Takeshi Suzuki.

For those not in the know, Suzuki used to be the executive chef of a hotel in Garapan and also headlined a quaint little restaurant along Beach Road, both frequented by local and Japanese tourists for its one-of-a-kind curry dishes.

After a brief sabbatical, Suzuki is back to doing what he does best—tickling the palates of food lovers—via the opening of Takumi Restaurant, whose backstory is as interesting as the dishes the master chef makes.

Suzuki soft-opened Takumi Restaurant last Jan. 3 in partnership with Saipan Pacific Winds Concert Band conductor and musical director Atsuko Eck.

The two are bandmates at the aforementioned musical group—Suzuki plays the trombone—and share not only the same interest in performing together but also offering fusion Japanese food.

At any given lunch day, Takumi Restaurant is full with customers lining up for Suzuki's famous curry.

But the sublime dish is by no means the only treat in the menu, as they also serve hamburger steak, chicken cutlet, grilled chicken, grilled salmon, breaded salmon, garlic shrimp, golden fried shrimp, grilled beef, and assorted cutlets, among others.

While not a classic Japanese chef, Suzuki has managed to seamlessly integrate his French-Italian culinary training with oriental cooking to make the food he prepares entirely his own and now uniquely Takumi's.

As for the name Takumi, Eck said the word roughly translates to master in Japanese, which is clearly in homage to Suzuki's expertise in cooking.

Suzuki and Eck also chose Takumi's location because it's at the heart of the tourist district of Garapan and walking distance from the island's main hotels.

They also can't wait when the Paseo De Marianas reverts back to a street again after months of construction because it means there will be more tourist and local traffic for their newly opened restaurant.

Aside from Takumi Restaurant, Eck and Suzuki are also collaborating on a side hustle of sorts as an instrument repair shop service is literally alongside the restaurant, which constitutes its interesting backstory.

Eck said the business was borne out of need as many of their bandmates at Saipan Pacific Winds Concert Band and other musical groups on Saipan have musical instruments in different states of disrepair.

She said they used to ship broken instruments to Japan but that became a problem during the COVID-19 pandemic when both the CNMI and Japan were on lockdown.

With the Takumi Restaurant and the musical repair shop, Eck and Suzuki are truly hitting two birds with one stone and appealing to both the dining and musical community's passions.

Takumi Restaurant and its adjacent musical instrument repair shop are located at the back of ABC Store in the former Paseo De Marianas in Garapan.

It's open from 11am-2pm from Monday to Saturday and 5pm-9pm from Tuesday to Saturday. Takumi Restaurant can also accommodate private parties of up to 25 people.

For reservations or for more information, call (670) 233-8564, email belltreecorners670@gmail.com, and can also be reached via Facebook and Instagram.

Full Moon Yoga at Hyatt

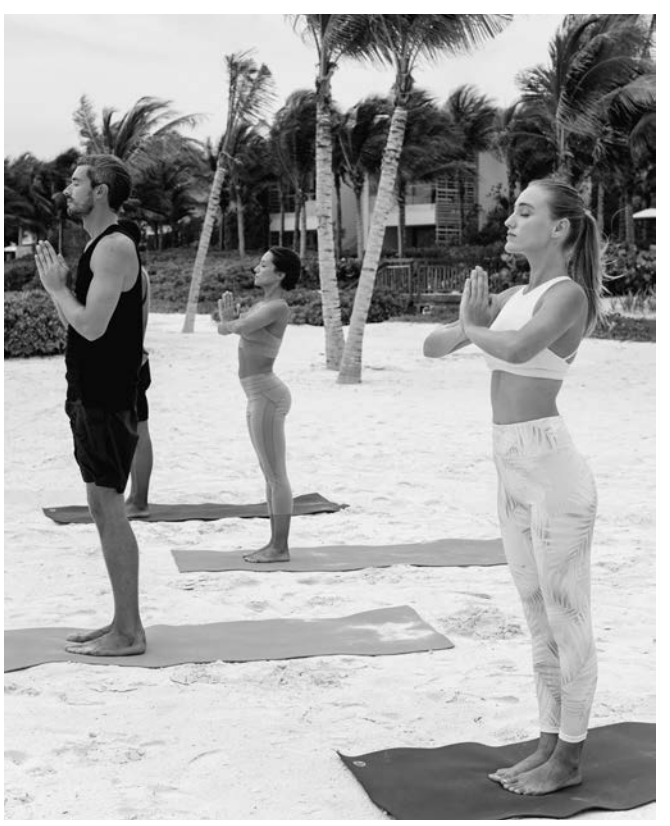
Hyatt Regency Saipan believes in starting the year right with fitness and well-being, and is hosting the first Full Moon Yoga on Saipan this Sunday. Caring for others so they can be their best is a commitment and a part of the hotel's DNA for more than 60 years.

Just like the moon that takes time to be visibly full, yoga done right will help your body reach full potential in terms of mobility and flexibility. Renowned yoga instructor Kerri Bauer will guide participants every step of the way.

"Yoga is beneficial because it helps clear one's mind and focus your breathing which is scientifically proven to help reduce stress. It helps develop core strength, better posture, and body awareness," she said.

Full Moon Yoga will be held at the Hyatt Beach right beside the relaxing sound of the waves and under the moonlit sky. Class is from 5:45pm to 6:45pm. Yoga fee is $10 and beginners are welcome. Participants must bring their own mat or beach towel.

To register, call (670)234-1234 front desk or WhatsApp Bauer at (670) 484-3848. The next class is on March 7, 2023, Tuesday.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Full Moon Yoga will be held at the Hyatt Beach this Sunday from 5:45pm to 6:45pm.

Biden, McCarthy meet face-to-face on debt crisis worries

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy met face-to-face Wednesday for more than an hour of highly anticipated budget talks—"a good first meeting," the new Republican leader said—but expectations were low for quick progress as GOP lawmakers push for steep cuts in a deal to prevent a national debt limit crisis.

Biden has resisted direct spending negotiations linked to vital action raising the nation's legal debt ceiling, warning against potentially throwing the economy into chaos.

McCarthy had all but invited himself to the White House to start the conversation before a summer debt deadline. And he emerged saying the meeting went better than expected: The two agreed to meet again, and the speaker said he expected to hear from Biden soon.

"No agreement, no promises except we will continue this conversation," McCarthy told reporters outside the White House.

He said he told the president he would not raise the debt ceiling without concessions from Democrats.

"I was very clear," he said. "We're not spending more next year than we spent this year."

And Biden's response? McCarthy said the president insisted on a "clean debt ceiling" vote without the budget cuts Republicans are demanding.

"We both have different perspectives on this, but I thought this was a good meeting," McCarthy said.

The White House said the president and the speaker agreed to continue the conversation. The president made clear that it is their "shared duty" to not allow a "catastrophic default," the White House said.

Off The Wall

Radioactive capsule that fell off a truck found in Australia

PERTH, Australia (AP)—Authorities in Western Australia on Wednesday recovered a tiny but dangerous radioactive capsule that fell off a truck while being transported along a 1,400-kilometer (870-mile) Outback highway last month in what an official said was like finding the needle in the haystack.

Officials said the capsule the size of a pea was found south of the mining town of Newman on the Great Northern Highway. It was detected by a search vehicle travelling at 70 kilometers (43 miles) per hour when specialist equipment picked up radiation emitting from the capsule.

Portable search equipment was then used to locate it 2 meters (6.5 feet) from the side of the road.

"This is an extraordinary result ... they have quite literally found the needle in the haystack," said Emergency Services Minister Stephen Dawson.

Chief Health Officer Andy Robertson said the capsule did not appear to have moved and no injuries had been reported.

It contains the caesium 137 ceramic source, commonly used in radiation gauges, which emits dangerous amounts of radiation, equivalent of receiving 10 X-rays in an hour. It could cause skin burns and prolonged exposure could cause cancer.

Search crews had spent six days scouring the entire length of the highway.

The capsule measures 8 millimeters by 6 millimeters (0.31 inches by 0.24 inches), and people have been warned it could have unknowingly become lodged in their car's tires.

A government investigation has been launched into how the capsule fell off the truck and a report will be provided to the health minister.

Defense officials were verifying the identification of the capsule, which has been placed into a lead container for safety. It will be stored in a secure location in Newman before being transported to a health facility in the city of Perth.

The capsule got lost while being transported between a desert mine site and Perth on Jan. 10. The truck transporting the capsule arrived at a Perth depot on Jan. 16. Emergency services were notified of the missing capsule on Jan. 25.

The chief executive of the mining giant Rio Tinto Iron Ore, Simon Trott, has apologized for the incident and expressed gratitude for the find.

"A pretty incredible recovery when you think of the distances involved, and also the remoteness of the terrain, and I think that really speaks to the tenacity of all those who were involved in the search," Trott said.

NM considers roasted chile as official state aroma

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—The sweet smell of green chile roasting on an open flame permeates New Mexico every fall, wafting from roadside stands and grocery store parking lots and inducing mouth-watering visions of culinary wonders.

Now one state lawmaker says it's time for everyone to wake up and smell the chile.

Sen. Bill Soules' visit with fifth grade students in his southern district sparked a conversation about the savory hot peppers and the potential for New Mexico to become the first state in the nation to proudly have an official state aroma, a proposal now being considered by lawmakers.

"It's very unique to our state," the Las Cruces Democrat said of roasting chile. "I have tried to think of any other state that has a smell or aroma that is that distinctive statewide, and I can't think of any."

For New Mexico, chile is more than a key ingredient for every meal. It's life. It's at the center of the official state question—"Red or green?"—and is one of the state's official vegetables.

New Mexico produced more than 60% of the U.S. chile pepper crop in 2021 and is home to Hatch, an agricultural village known as the chile capital of the world for the unique red and green peppers it has turned out for generations. The famous crop also is used in powders, sauces and salsas that are shipped worldwide.

Legislation recognizing roasted chile as the official aroma passed its first committee on Tuesday, and supporters say it's not likely to fire up much debate—other than lawmakers sharing their own stories about how they can't go a day without eating it, from red chile lattes to smothered breakfast burritos to plates of enchiladas and tamales infused with the peppers.

"Chile is in the hearts and on the plates of all New Mexicans, and the smell of fresh roasting green chile allows us to reminisce on a memory eating or enjoying our beloved signature crop. We like to call that memory a person's 'chile story,' and each of us as New Mexicans have a chile story," said Travis Day, executive director of the New Mexico Chile Association.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Fully clothed bathing burglar found in Seattle bathroom

SEATTLE (AP)—A man suspected of breaking into a Seattle home has refused to come clean about his intentions, even though police found him fully clothed in a bathtub filled with water. A woman returned to her home Friday night to find a window smashed and an unknown man inside the house, according to the Seattle Police Department. She remained outside the home and called police. Upon their arrival, officers instructed anyone inside to come out. When they got no reply, they went in to search the home—and found a suspect in a bathroom. "The man was clothed but very wet, and the bathtub was full of water," police said in a statement. The 27-year-old man was arrested for residential burglary and refused to explain his actions, including his choice of a bathing spot, police said.

'29-year-old posed as teen to enroll in HS'

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (AP)—A 29-year-old woman used false documents to enroll as a New Jersey high school student and attended some classes over a four-day period before her scheme was discovered last week, authorities said.It's not yet known what the woman's intentions were, officials said. She reportedly got the phone numbers of students who helped her find her way through New Brunswick High School and continued to text some of them days after her ruse was discovered. The woman has been barred from entering school grounds in the district, and officials advised students to not have any contact with her.The woman provided district officials with a false birth certificate, officials said.

Science & Technology

Bring back dodo? Ambitious plan draws investors, critics

WASHINGTON (AP)—The dodo bird isn't coming back anytime soon. Nor is the woolly mammoth. But a company working on technologies to bring back extinct species has attracted more investors, while other scientists are skeptical such feats are possible or a good idea.

Colossal Biosciences first announced its ambitious plan to revive the woolly mammoth two years ago, and on Tuesday said it wanted to bring back the dodo bird, too.

"The dodo is a symbol of man-made extinction," said Ben Lamm, a serial entrepreneur and co-founder and CEO of Colossal. The company has formed a division to focus on bird-related genetic technologies.

The last dodo, a flightless bird about the size of a turkey, was killed in 1681 on the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius.

The Dallas company, which launched in 2021, also announced Tuesday it had raised an additional $150 million in funding. To date, it has raised $225 million from wide-ranging investors that include United States Innovative Technology Fund, Breyer Capital and In-Q-Tel, the CIA's venture capital firm which invests in technology.

The prospect of bringing the dodo back isn't expected to directly make money, said Lamm. But the genetic tools and equipment that the company develops to try to do it may have other uses, including for human health care, he said.

For example, Colossal is now testing tools to tweak several parts of the genome simultaneously. It's also working on technologies for what is sometimes called an "artificial womb," he said.

The dodo's closest living relative is the Nicobar pigeon, said Beth Shapiro, a molecular biologist on Colossal's scientific advisory board, who has been studying the dodo for two decades. Shapiro is paid by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which also supports The Associated Press' Health and Science Department.

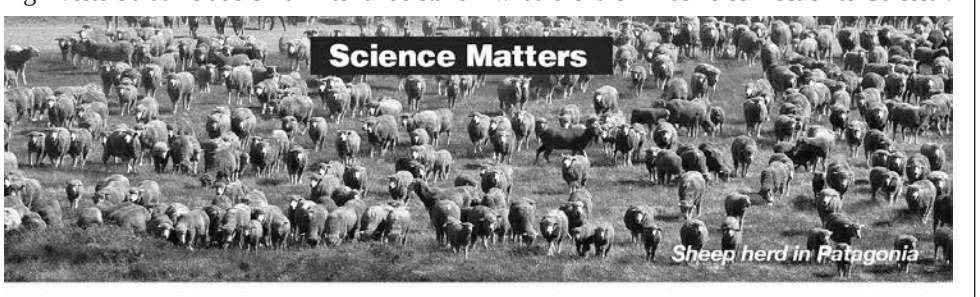
Her team plans to study DNA differences between the Nicobar pigeon and the dodo to understand "what are the genes that really make a dodo a dodo," she said.

The team may then attempt to edit Nicobar pigeon cells to make them resemble dodo cells. It may be possible to put the tweaked cells into developing eggs of other birds, such as pigeons or chickens, to create offspring that may in turn naturally produce dodo eggs, said Shapiro. The concept is still in an early theoretical stage for dodos.

Because animals are a product of both their genetics and their environment—which has changed dramatically since the 1600s—Shapiro said that "it's not possible to recreate a 100% identical copy of something that's gone."

Other scientists wonder if it's even advisable to try, and question whether "de-extinction" diverts attention and money away from efforts to save species still on Earth.

"There's a real hazard in saying that if we destroy nature, we can just put it back together again—because we can't," said Duke University ecologist Stuart Pimm, who has no connection to Colossal.



Sheep herd moves democratically

Flocks of birds and schools of fish move in leaderless but coordinated ways that make sense mathematically. A new study discovered the distinctive way sheep herds move.

Earlier theory on sheep's movement held that they make group decisions, led by a "collective brain"

New observations:

1 Instead of moving with the sheep beside and around them, all sheep except the leader sheep follow the animal immediately in front of them

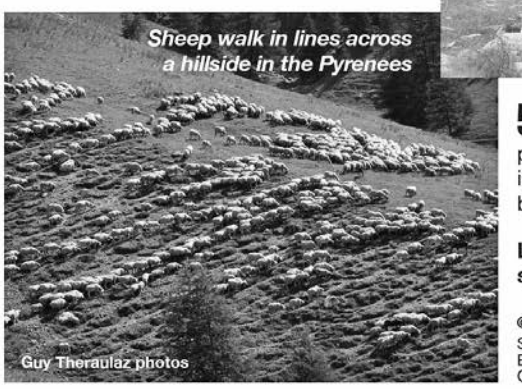
2 The flock gradually forms lines going in the direction chosen by the leader

3 The line of sheep can navigate complex environments – like a maze – if the group leader knows how to find the exit

4 **Democratic "leader switching":** Sheep that know the way may take over as leaders

Male Pyrenees sheep stop to graze

Sheep walk in lines across a hillside in the Pyrenees



Guy Theraulaz photos

5 **Stopping to graze:** As the group passes different locations with food, individual sheep that see the places become leaders of part of the group

Leader-swapping lets the group split up to graze efficiently

© 2023 TNS

Source: Luis Gomez-Nava of Technische Universität Berlin; Nature Physics journal; TNS Photos
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service

Life & Style

Alec Baldwin scheduled for court on charges in set death

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—Alec Baldwin's first court appearance has been set as he confronts accusations of firearm safety failures and involuntary manslaughter in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer on a New Mexico film set.

A New Mexico court on Wednesday scheduled Baldwin and film-set weapons supervisor Hannah Gutierrez-Reed to appear by videoconference before Santa Fe-based District Court Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer in late February, leaving several weeks before the defendants may provide a formal response to felony charges. They were both charged Tuesday with involuntary manslaughter in the death of Halyna Hutchins on the set of the Western movie "Rust."

Hutchins died shortly after being wounded during rehearsals at a ranch on the outskirts of Santa Fe on Oct. 21, 2021. Baldwin was pointing a pistol at Hutchins when the gun went off, killing her and wounding the director, Joel Souza.

A manslaughter charge can be brought if a defendant killed while doing something lawful but dangerous and was acting negligently or without caution.

In newly filed court documents, prosecutors said reckless safety failures accompanied the film production from the outset. They cite Baldwin's failure as an actor to appear for mandatory firearms training prior to filming and his decision as a producer to work with Gutierrez-Reed, who was an uncertified and inexperienced armorer.

A probable cause statement from investigators traces safety failures across a 10-day period, such as misfires on set, a camera crew walkout and the moments before Hutchins' death as a revolver was loaded with ammunition and Baldwin's finger came to rest on the pistol's trigger.

"Baldwin's deviation from known standards, practices and protocol directly caused" Hutchins' death, Robert Shilling, a special investigator for the Santa Fe district attorney's office, said in the probable cause statement.

Baldwin's attorney Luke Nikas declined to comment Tuesday and referred to a previous statement in which he called the charges a "terrible miscarriage of justice" that he and his client would fight and win.

Ozzy Osbourne cancels his 2023 European tour dates, cites injury

Hard rock legend Ozzy Osbourne announced the cancellation of his 2023 tour dates in the U.K. and continental Europe.

Osbourne issued a statement early Wednesday saying damage to his spine suffered in an accident four years ago will prevent him from touring.

"I am honestly humbled by the way you've all patiently held onto your tickets for all this time, but in all good conscience, I have now come to the realization that I'm not physically capable of doing my upcoming European/UK tour dates, as I know I couldn't deal with the travel required," Osbourne said.

The 74-year-old Grammy winner and former vocalist for the metal band Black Sabbath said "my singing voice is fine" but said he remained physically weak following three operations, stem cell treatments, physical therapy and Hybrid Assistive Limb treatment, which uses a robotic exoskeleton to help improve movement and balance.

He thanked his family, fans, band and crew members and fellow metal pioneers Judas Priest.

"Never would I have imagined that my touring days would have ended this way," Osbourne said. "My team is currently coming up with ideas for where I will be able to perform without having to travel from city to city and country to country."

Ticket refunds will be available at the point of purchase, the statement said.

Osbourne previously cancelled tour dates in Europe and North America in 2019 due to health problems, including a "bad fall" in which he said he injured vertebrae in his neck.

The singer, who enjoyed solo success after leaving Black Sabbath, announced in 2020 that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, a nervous system disorder that affects movement. ***(AP)***

Missy, Willie and George Michael among Rock Hall nominees

AP

This combination of photos shows Missy Elliott, George Michael and Willie Nelson, who are among this year's nominees for 2023 induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

NEW YORK (AP)—Missy Elliott, Willie Nelson, Kate Bush, Iron Maiden, Cyndi Lauper, Soundgarden, Sheryl Crow and the late George Michael are the 2023 nominees for induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, reflecting a mix of country, soul, hip-hop, metal, pop, rap-rock and grunge.

The Cleveland-based institution announced Wednesday the 14 artists and groups being considered for Rock Hall induction, also including Rage Against the Machine, The Spinners, A Tribe Called Quest, The White Stripes, Warren Zevon and Joy Division/New Order.

If Elliott makes it, she would become the first female hip-hop artist in the hall.

"This is an incredible honor. I'm so humbled and grateful to be counted amongst all the incredible honorees. I've spent my career making the kind of music I love and it means so much to know that I have touched others as well," she said in a statement.

Artists must have released their first commercial recording at least 25 years before they're eligible for induction.

"This remarkable list of nominees reflects the diverse artists and music that the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame honors and celebrates," said John Sykes, chair of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Foundation in a statement. "These artists have created their own sounds that have impacted generations and influenced countless others that have followed in their footsteps."

Beyoncé announces much anticipated 'Renaissance' world tour

Beyoncé is taking her "Renaissance" global—the superstar will start a world tour in Sweden in May with stops throughout Europe and the United States.

The highly anticipated tour announcement she made on Instagram and her website Wednesday comes days before the Grammy Awards on Sunday, where the global superstar is the most nominated artist and could make Recording Academy history.

Beyoncé, the most decorated woman in Grammy history with 28 wins, could break the late Hungarian-British conductor Georg Solti's record for most awards won if she wins four awards.

Her 2022 album "Renaissance" is a celebration of dance music and is nominated for album of the year. Her tour will make stops in London, Paris, Barcelona and Toronto before ending Sept. 27 in New Orleans.

There were hints that she might tour again after she performed an invite-only show in January in Dubai at the Atlantis The Royal Resort, her first show in four years. Her last solo tour was in 2016, but she went on tour with her husband Jay Z in 2018.

Ticketmaster said in a release that sales will begin Feb. 6 and fans will need to register through their Verified Fan system. Sale times will vary based on city. ***(AP)***

Former friend doesn't know the whole story

DEAR ABBY: About 10 years ago, my longtime best friend, "Byron," abruptly cut me out of his life. I never clearly understood why. I reached out to him on and off for several years without success. Then I ran into him, traded pleasantries and we followed up. He returned my email, we began communicating again about things that mattered, and it appeared our friendship was on the mend.

A short time later, my wife (only an acquaintance of his) divorced me and began a massive social media attack against me. Most of my friends saw through her lies. I took the high road and never said anything about her lunacy. Then she ramped it up by going after some of the people she knew were important in my life, including Byron. Soon after, I heard she had her hooks in him and he stopped communicating with me. My ex-wife has since passed away.

I have dreams that Byron and I are friends again, doing the things we used to do, and I would like to try "Rebuild No. 2" but don't know where to start. He never got the full story, only the part that made me look bad. Do I mention my ex-wife's lies, or do I just try and start over again? And if so, how?

UNFRIENDED AGAIN IN MICHIGAN

DEAR UNFRIENDED: True friends do not treat each other the way that Byron has treated you. They discuss their differences instead of cutting each other off. Your "friend" could have come to you after he was contacted by your ex-wife. He could also have asked some of your mutual friends if what she was spreading was true. Byron did neither. Go on with your life and don't look back, or you will receive more of the same from this person.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm very depressed and upset with myself. I cheated on my husband, "Hal," and told him after I realized I had gotten an STI from the man I cheated with. Hal was very upset, and we didn't talk for a day and a half, but he didn't yell or call me names. I feel so guilty and confused. He's being really nice, not cussing at me. It's strange.

Things are different between us now, and it's my fault. It will take time and patience, I guess. But I miss the intimacy and affection Hal and I once shared. Is it normal for me to want him to yell at me and show his anger? When I try to talk about him getting tested for STIs, he gets quiet and brings up the past. Please help me. I just want things back the way they were before I cheated. What do I do?

RELUCTANT CHEATER IN OREGON

DEAR RELUCTANT CHEATER: Hal needs to talk to his doctor and schedule an appointment to be tested, and you must be willing to talk to him about "the past" and why you cheated on him. You owe your husband an explanation. That he hasn't yelled or called you names doesn't mean he isn't hurt and furious about what happened. It may take counseling with a licensed marriage and family therapist for your marriage to be repaired. If you do this, although your relationship may never go back to the way it was before you cheated, it may be better.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

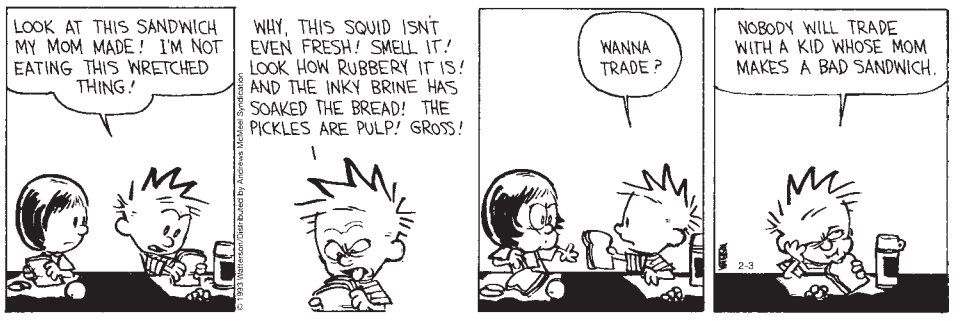
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

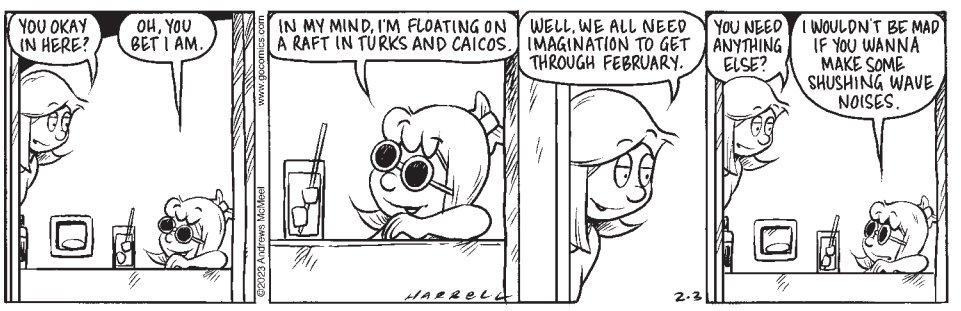

LOOK AT THIS SANDWICH MY MOM MADE! I'M NOT EATING THIS WRETCHED THING!
WHY, THIS SQUID ISN'T EVEN FRESH! SMELL IT! LOOK HOW RUBBERY IT IS! AND THE INKY BRINE HAS SOAKED THE BREAD! THE PICKLES ARE PULP! GROSS!
WANNA TRADE?
NOBODY WILL TRADE WITH A KID WHOSE MOM MAKES A BAD SANDWICH.
2-3

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

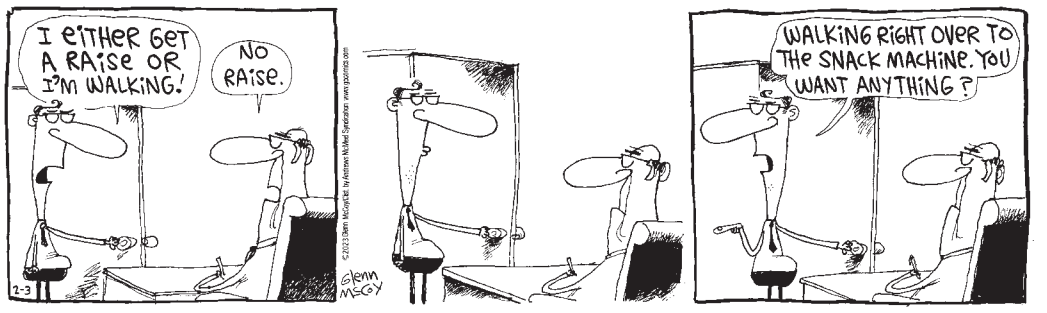
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


YOU OKAY IN HERE?
OH, YOU BET I AM.
IN MY MIND, I'M FLOATING ON A RAFT IN TURKS AND CAICOS.
WELL, WE ALL NEED IMAGINATION TO GET THROUGH FEBRUARY.
YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE?
I WOULDN'T BE MAD IF YOU WANNA MAKE SOME SHUSHING WAVE NOISES.
2-3

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 America's uncle
4 Mornings, briefly
7 Hokey
12 Opposite of "post-"
13 Decay
14 Maya Angelou's "And Still —"
15 Trench
16 1974 Jack Nicholson film
18 Jurist Fortas
19 Dev Patel's role in "Lion"
20 "I did it!"
22 Leb. neighbor
23 Anti-oxidant berry
27 Dime portrait
29 Detroit record label
31 Bumpkin
34 Asian noodles
35 "— Funk" (Bruno Mars hit)
37 Supporting
38 Missing
39 Before
41 Bagh-dad's land
45 Chopping down
47 Ostrich's kin
48 1982 Billy Joel song
52 — polloi
53 Banquet
54 Sigma follower
55 Illustrations
56 Boxer's dream
57 Method (Abbr.)
58 Spell-off

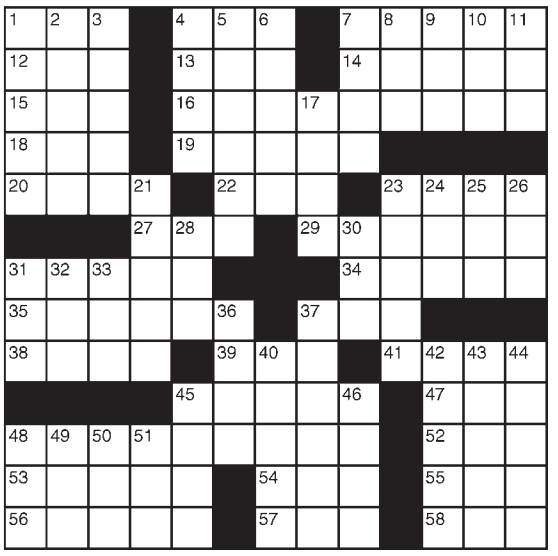
DOWN

1 Jack who ate no fat
2 Island off Venezuela
3 Rationed (out)
4 Curved lines
5 Sweater wool
6 Mixes up
7 "Arrivederci!"
8 Scrap
9 Carnival city
10 Sydney's state (Abbr.)
11 Longing
17 Par
21 In progress
23 Arcade pioneer
24 URL suffix
25 Shock partner
26 Hostel
28 Part of DJIA
30 Spanish gold
31 Actor Brynner
32 GI's address
33 Uplands, for short
36 On deck
37 Boston stadium
40 Mob scenes
42 Detox center
43 Love, to Luigi
44 Rather
45 Pot starter
46 Wilde-beests
48 Astern
49 Floral garland
50 Long. crosser
51 Immi-grant's subj.

Solution time: 25 mins.

P	J	S		B	E	T	A		O	A	R	S
O	U	T		O	D	O	R		A	L	I	T
S	T	A	R	D	U	S	T		T	O	B	Y
			R	O	I		S	I	A	M	E	S	E
K	I	T	T	E	N		E	R	E			
O	D	E		S	A	D		K	A	F	K	A
T	E	R	M		B	I	G		L	I	E	U
B	A	S	I	L		P	E	R		V	E	T
			L	O	W		M	O	R	E	N	O
S	A	N	D	B	A	R		A	N	S		
L	E	A	R		F	I	L	M	S	T	A	R
A	R	N	E		E	P	E	E		A	R	A
M	O	O	D		R	E	I	D		R	I	G

Yesterday's answer 2-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Brandon Micheal Hall, 30; Isla Fisher, 47; Terry Chen, 48; Blythe Danner, 80.

Happy Birthday: Recognize how much you have to offer. You will surpass your expectations this year. Listen to your opponents to gain insight into their flaws. Your actions are your best routes to victory. Keep an open mind when dealing with loved ones; anger won't solve anything, but reason and compromise will keep the peace. Your numbers are 8, 19, 26, 28, 31, 44, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Focus and discipline are fundamental. Don't stop until you reach your destination and have something to celebrate. There is money to be made if you reconnect with someone who pays well and gives you the freedom to do what you do best. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You must earn trust today. Don't let anyone talk you into something you are unfamiliar with or don't want. Follow your intuition and research if you want to come out on top. Change is tempting, and if appropriately implemented, success will follow. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't let time lapse between an offer and your decision to accept. Indecisiveness will put a dent in your reputation and the respect you warrant from others. Don't let anger set in; get busy before it's too late to recoup your losses. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take an interest in something unusual, and new beginnings and friendships will develop. Don't offer too much information; listen carefully and gain insight into how and what others think. It's helpful to stay one step ahead of your opponent. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Difficult situations will occur between you and a close partner, boss or authority. Adjust and dissipate any dispute that can make you look bad or cost you financially. Information you receive will confuse you; consider the source before you respond. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* You'll be the go-to person for solutions. Enjoy the attention, do your best to be forthright intellectually and offer hands-on help. You'll buy respect and gain confidence by taking care of other people's dilemmas. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* State the facts and procedures. Your clear-cut approach will make it easier to get what you want. Someone you are close to will question your motives. Be prepared to disclose your intentions. A good blueprint of your long-term goals will alleviate setbacks. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take notes, do things by the book and surround yourself with like-minded people. Reconnect with someone who can offer insight into a situation you never rectified. Don't let a problem at home escalate. 5 stars

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Choose your side carefully. Battles take time and energy with little payback. Be rational and distance yourself from controversial people trying to involve you in something that contradicts who you are and what you believe. Stay in your lane and do your thing. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Take precautions if you barrel ahead; you'll hit obstacles. Patience and tolerance will help you maintain integrity and progress. Positive change is within reach; all you must do is follow through. Stop fighting the inevitable that everything will fall into place. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be ready for anything and everything. Use your discipline to keep the momentum flowing on time. Your innovative ideas and versatility will lead to positive change and a happier home life. Make health and fitness priorities. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Waiting for others to do things is futile. Take the initiative and follow through with your plans instead of discussing what you want to do and expecting others to fulfill your dreams. A proactive approach will pay off. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are ambitious, proactive and strong-willed. You are popular and conscientious.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2		1	4	8			3
				9			2	
	1				7		4	5
	9		2					
		1		7		5		8
7				8				2
			7	1	4			
4		5	9					
						7		

Difficulty: ★★★★ 2-3

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesturday's Answer

5	2	6	1	4	8	9	7	3
8	4	7	5	9	3	1	2	6
9	1	3	6	2	7	8	4	5
3	9	8	2	6	5	4	1	7
2	6	1	4	7	9	5	3	8
7	5	4	3	8	1	6	9	2
6	8	2	7	1	4	3	5	9
4	7	5	9	3	6	2	8	1
1	3	9	8	5	2	7	6	4

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Difficulty: ★★★★ 2-3

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

HYDRATING YOUR SKIN **Solution: 9 letters**

S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N	I	M	A	T	I	V
H	H	U	M	I	D	I	F	I	E	R	E	N	O	T
Y	F	O	N	O	E	X	F	O	L	I	A	T	E	V
A	E	S	W	A	S	H	T	O	O	M	S	F	E	S
L	E	C	L	E	A	N	S	E	R	I	A	S	G	E
U	T	R	E	H	R	H	N	R	G	C	O	N	L	R
R	N	E	G	I	S	E	L	O	I	F	G	B	Y	O
O	E	A	S	E	G	A	L	A	T	H	E	R	C	P
N	I	M	R	A	R	O	L	A	Y	E	R	O	E	U
I	L	F	L	E	T	O	H	P	X	A	P	S	R	R
C	L	L	N	A	E	T	I	K	S	A	M	B	I	I
A	O	I	M	V	A	L	L	A	R	U	T	A	N	F
C	M	R	E	B	M	U	C	U	C	D	A	I	L	Y
I	E	R	H	T	E	Z	I	R	U	T	S	I	O	M
D	A	E	H	E	R	O	F	O	R	M	U	L	A	N

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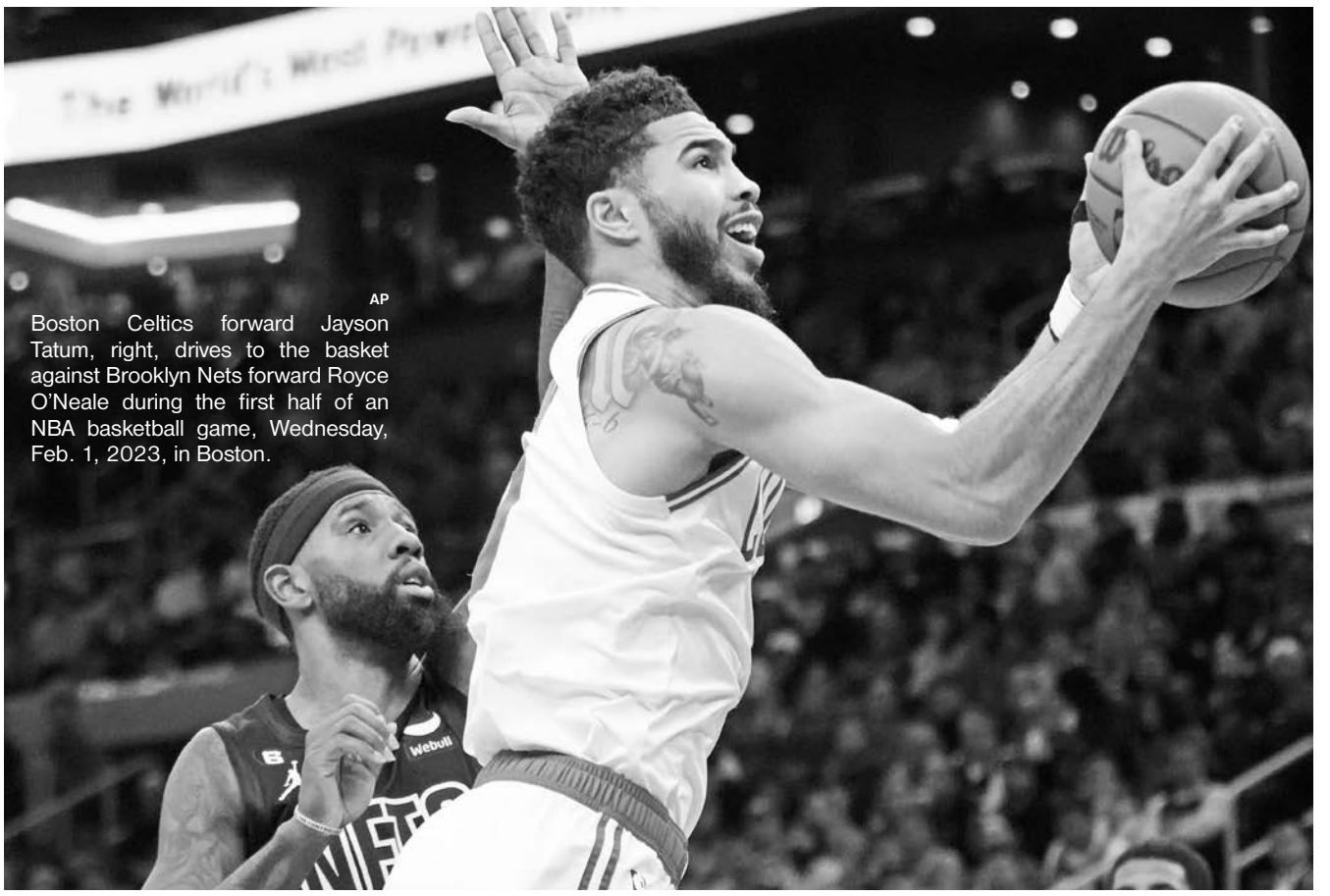
Absorb, Aloe Vera, Bath, Cleanser, Collagen, Cream, Cucumber, Daily, Dermatologist, Emollient, Exfoliate, Facial, Feet, Forehead, Formula, Fresh, Glycerin, Humidifier, Hyaluronic Acid, Lather, Layer, Legs, Lip, Mask, Mineral, Moisturize, Natural, Pores, Purify, Relaxation, Rinse, Shower, Smooth, Soft, Spa, Splash, Sunscreen, Toner, Vitamin, Wash

Yesterday's Answer: Don't Stop

The NEW **Volume 70** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Jayson Tatum scores 31 points, NBA-leading Celtics rout Nets



AP
Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum, right, drives to the basket against Brooklyn Nets forward Royce O'Neale during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, in Boston.

BOSTON (AP)—Jayson Tatum had 31 points and nine rebounds and the NBA-leading Boston Celtics rolled to a 139-96 victory over the short-handed Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday night.

Jaylen Brown added 26 points as both of Boston's stars hit seven 3-pointers in a game the Celtics never trailed and led by 49 points. Boston dominated on both ends of the floor, shooting 60% through three quarters on the way to its largest victory of the season.

Robert Williams finished with 16 points and nine rebounds in his return from a sprained ankle. Derrick White added 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Kyrie Irving scored 20 points and Cam Thomas added 19 for Brooklyn, which struggled throughout while shooting 41%, including 9 of 39 beyond the arc. The Nets dropped to 4-7 since Kevin Durant sprained his right knee Jan. 8.

76ERS 105, MAGIC 94

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Joel Embiid had 28 points and 11 rebounds, James Harden added 26 points and 10 assists and Philadelphia beat Orlando.

The Sixers split the home-and-home set this week with Orlando. The Magic stormed back from a 21-point, first-quarter deficit to beat the 76ers 119-109 on Monday night. That loss ended the 76ers' seven-game winning streak.

Embiid, the NBA scoring leader, made all 10 of his free throws and was 9-of-17 shooting overall.

Markelle Fultz led Orlando with 18 points.

TIMBERWOLVES 119, WARRIORS 114, OT

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—D'Angelo Russell scored 14 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter, Anthony Edwards took over in overtime after Russell fouled out and Minnesota outlasted Golden State.

After a scoreless fourth quarter, Edwards was aggressive in overtime, driving to the basket and scoring in traffic on multiple possessions. Edwards helped the Timberwolves— who trailed by 11 after three —complete the comeback. He scored just four of his 27 points in overtime but was the catalyst in the extra session.

Stephen Curry had 29 points and 10 rebounds for Golden State. Jordan Poole added 18 points, and Draymond Green had 10 points and 12 rebounds. The Warriors had won three in a row.

TRAIL BLAZERS 122, GRIZZLIES 112

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Damian Lillard had 42 points and 10 assists, Anfernee Simons added 26 points and Portland Trail rallied to beat Memphis.

Jerami Grant had 18 points in the first half, before leaving because of concussion symptoms. Portland outscored Memphis 38-22 in the fourth quarter to win for the fourth time in five games.

Ja Morant had 32 points, 12 assists and nine rebounds for Memphis.

HAWKS 132, SUNS 100

PHOENIX (AP)—Dejounte Murray scored 21 points, Trae Young added 20 and Atlanta rolled past Phoenix.

The Hawks never trailed, jumping to a 9-4 lead with three 3-pointers. Atlanta never let up, pushing to a 102-67 advantage by the end of the third quarter and leading by 43 points in the fourth.

Phoenix—with star guard Devin Booker close to returning from a groin injury—lost for just the second time in eight games.

Mikal Bridges led the Suns with 23 points.

JAZZ 131, RAPTORS 128

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Lauri Markkanen had 28 points and 13 rebounds and Mike Conley added a three-point play and two clutch free throws in the closing minutes to lift Utah past Toronto.

Jordan Clarkson scored 23 points, and Conley had 19 points and eight assists.

Toronto's Fred VanVleet had his second career triple-double with 34 points, 10 assists and a career-best 12 rebounds.

KINGS 119, SPURS 109

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Domantas Sabonis scored a season-high 34 points and had 11 rebounds and Sacramento handed San Antonio its seventh straight loss.

De'Aaron Fox added 31 points for Sacramento. The Kings have won two straight and nine of 12.

Rookie Malaki Branham had a season-high 22 points for San Antonio. The Spurs have lost 12 of 12.

ROCKETS 112, THUNDER 106

HOUSTON (AP)—Eric Gordon had a season-high 25 points and rookie Tari Eason added career-high 20 and matched his career high with 13 rebounds to help Houston beat Oklahoma City.

The Rockets (13-38), who have the worst record in the Western Conference, have won three of their last five games after dropping 18 of the previous 19.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 24 points for Oklahoma City.

Denver's Michael Malone gets All-Star Game

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

Michael Malone might coach Nikola Jokic in the All-Star Game. He might get the rare chance to coach against him, too.

Malone and the staff of the Denver Nuggets have clinched their trip to Salt Lake City for All-Star weekend. Malone will coach Team LeBron— the team that will be drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James—in the Feb. 19 matchup.

Boston interim coach Joe Mazzulla will coach Team Giannis, the team that will be drafted by Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo.

Malone and the Nuggets' staff were locked into the All-Star trip Wednesday night when Portland defeated Memphis. That ensured that Denver will have the top spot in the Western Conference when play ends on Sunday; the All-Star coaches are based off which teams have the best record in each conference two weeks before the game.

"I say it every year and I told our players this. There's some teams that are dying for the All-Star break and can't wait to go to Cancun," Malone said. "No, we are keeping our eyes on the prize and we have to make sure we play all the way to the break."

If Malone had plans to go to Cancun or anyplace else over the break, he'll be leaving from Salt Lake City.

Jokic, the Nuggets' center and two-time reigning NBA MVP—and certainly a candidate to make it three in a row —is the only Denver player who'll start. The Nuggets may have more players selected Thursday when the NBA announces the seven Eastern Conference and seven Western Conference players that will be reserves.

But there's no guarantee Malone will coach Jokic. That's up to James and Antetokounmpo; one of them will draft Jokic, and if it's James, he'll be with Malone for the game.

It's the second time Malone will have the All-Star coaching job. He coached Team LeBron over Team Giannis in the 2019 game at Charlotte, 178-164.

He's one of three coaches to get to the All-Star Game as coach of the Nuggets. Larry Brown had the job in 1977 and George Karl had it in 2010.

Banchero headlines field for All-Star Rising Stars event

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

Paolo Banchero's rookie season will include a trip to NBA All-Star weekend.

The Orlando Magic forward and No. 1 pick in last year's draft was announced Tuesday as a participant in this year's Rising Stars Game, to be held in Salt Lake City on Feb. 17, two nights before the All-Star Game.

Banchero—who leads all rookies with a 20.7 points-per-game average—may still be selected as an All-Star reserve. Those players will be revealed Thursday.

"Anytime you can get a chance to be a part of All-Star weekend, you can't say no," Banchero said. "Especially me, being a rookie, first year, never experienced it before, it's always been the dream to just be a part of that whether it was Rising Stars or as a reserve. I'm definitely excited to get there and just see what it's like."

Banchero is on pace to be the first rookie to average 20 points per game since Luka Doncic in 2018-19. He also is fourth among rookies in rebounds per game entering Tuesday and third among them in steals per game.

Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said the All-Star experience—whether just for Rising Stars or not—will have an impact on Banchero.

"Just being around other young players that have found themselves in that position, it does so much because it's your peers," Mosley said. "You're around a group of young men who are the elite of the league in that class. I think it says something to the work that you've put in, the work that he's put in. It's going to do wonders for how he continues to believe in himself, what we're doing as a team and his continued growth."

Also picked for the game from this year's rookie class: Detroit's Jalen Duren and Jaden Ivey, Atlanta's A.J. Griffin, Utah's Walker Kessler, Indiana's Bennedict Mathurin and Andrew Nembhard, Sacramento's Keegan Murray, Houston's Jabari Smith Jr., San Antonio's Jeremy Sochan and Oklahoma City's Jalen Williams.

The second-year players selected were New Orleans' Jose Alvarado and Trey Murphy III, Toronto's Scottie Barnes, Oklahoma City's Josh Giddey, Houston's Jalen Green and Alperen Sengun, New York's Quentin Grimes, Denver's Bones Hyland, Cleveland's Evan Mobley and Orlando's Franz Wagner.

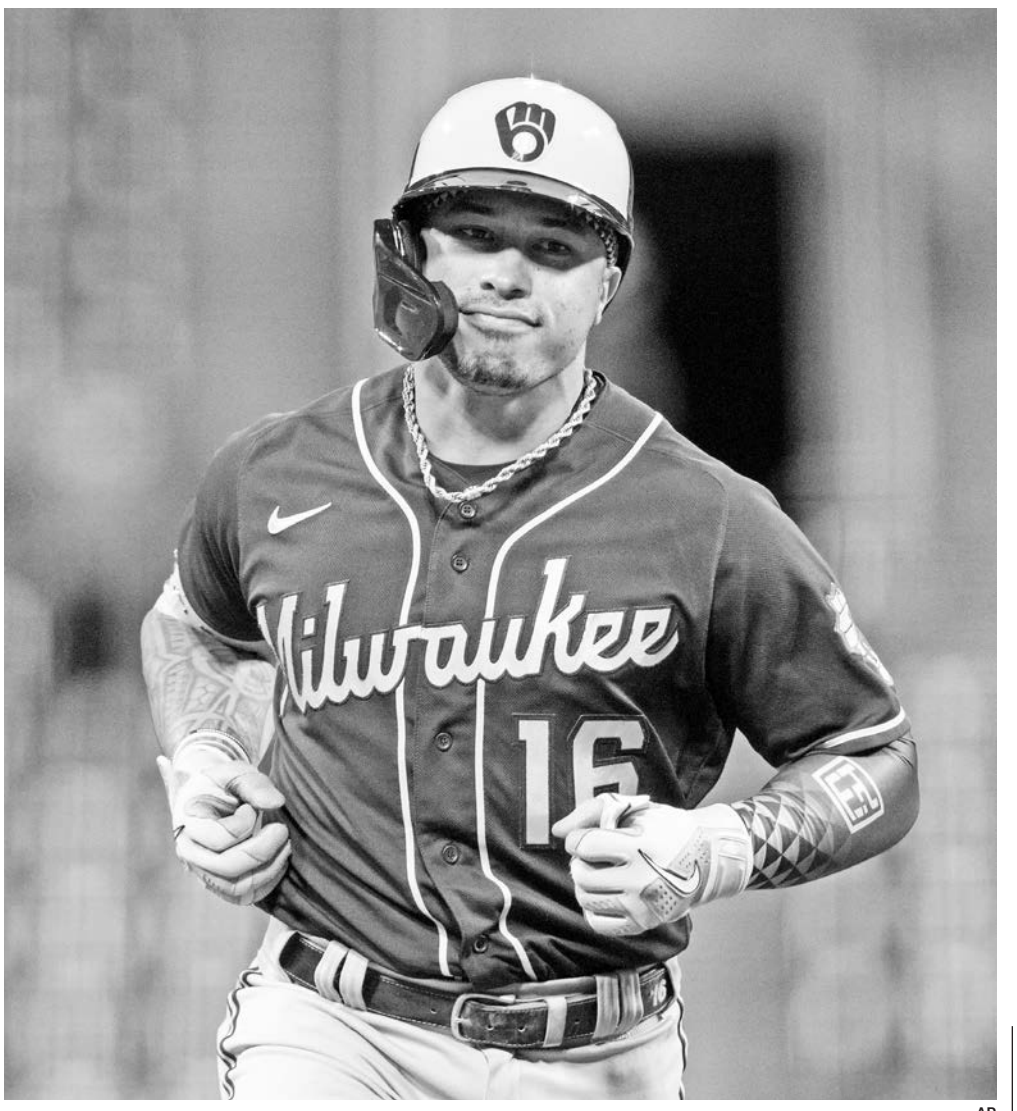
There also will be a team of G League players in the Rising Stars event, composed of Sidy Cissoko, Mojave King, Scoot Henderson, Kenneth Lofton Jr., Mac McClung, Leonard Miller and Scotty Pippen Jr.

The 21 NBA players will be drafted into three seven-player teams. Pau Gasol, Joakim Noah and Deron Williams will serve as coaches for those teams, while Jason Terry will coach the G League team.

All four teams will play a semifinal game with a target score of 40, and the two winners will then play the championship game with a target score of 25.

Mariners hope offseason additions have closed gap in AL West

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press



AP

Milwaukee Brewers' Kolten Wong (16) plays during a baseball game against the Cincinnati Reds Thursday, Sept. 22, 2022, in Cincinnati.

SEATTLE (AP)—Jerry Dipoto saw up close last year during the regular season and again in October where the differences lie if the Seattle Mariners expect to close the gap on Houston in the AL West.

While this winter lacked any significant splashes in free agency, Dipoto said Wednesday the Mariners are confident they're an improved team from the one that last season ended the longest playoff drought in baseball.

"The goal every year is to win the division, get into the postseason and try to do some damage. We've never been more convinced of this team's ability to do those things than we were at the end of last season," said Dipoto, Seattle's president of baseball operations. "I think that goes for all the players in the clubhouse because for us in the front office, our staff, we do feel like we got meaningfully better this offseason and we are a deeper, more complete team than we were at the end of last season."

There is a buzz and excitement about the Mariners in the Pacific Northwest that's been missing for the better part of two decades. Last season's run to a wild-card berth and playoff series win over Toronto—and all the dramatics that surrounded it—reinvigorated the slumbering baseball region.

But capitalizing on that—in a season that also includes Seattle hosting the All-Star Game—means closing ground on the World Series champion Astros both when it comes to the regular season but also in the playoffs. It was Houston that won the AL West by 16 games and then swept second-place Seattle out of the Division Series on the strength of a few big swings.

So the question remains whether the Mariners did enough this offseason to be a threat to the Astros. Seattle's foundation will continue to be its starting pitching and the everyday players back from last year like AL Rookie of the Year Julio Rodríguez, Ty France, J.P. Crawford and others.

The Mariners added second baseman Kolten Wong, outfielders Teoscar Hernández and AJ Pollock, and infielder Tommy La Stella. And while those additions should give Seattle a deeper and more versatile roster, they were not viewed from the outside as being impactful enough to make up the difference.

"It was a struggle for us offensively last year, certainly early in the season, getting consistent offense up and down the lineup," Seattle manager Scott Servais said. "So with more experience, guys going through things late in the season, in the playoffs, hopefully will really help us getting off to a little bit better start. And we've added some pieces."

WBC IMPACT

Seattle is expected to lose several players to the World Baseball Classic during spring training. Rodríguez, Hernández and reliever Diego Castillo are all expected to play for the Dominican Republic; third baseman Eugenio Suárez with Venezuela; reliever Matt Festa with Italy; reliever Matt Brash with Canada and top prospect Harry Ford with Great Britain.

One name notably missing from the list is starting pitcher Luis Castillo, who was expected to be part of the formidable Dominican staff. Dipoto said Castillo has opted not to pitch in the event.

"It's something that we are pleased with that he'll be (at spring training)," Dipoto said. "It's a choice that we made together and I'm excited to see him from beginning to end."

Seattle is notably antsy about the WBC after losing pitcher Drew Smyly to Tommy John surgery after pitching in the tournament in 2017. Felix Hernandez also pitched in the WBC that year and ended up with two lengthy stints on the injured list due to shoulder troubles.

"It's early in the season and these guys are playing at such a high intensity level when they haven't been doing that for a number of months, so you're always worried about injury," Servais said. "You want those guys to be healthy. These are certainly key contributors for us going into the season."

INJURY UPDATES

The Mariners expect to be mostly healthy when spring training begins. Seattle catcher Cal Raleigh is fully recovered from offseason thumb surgery. Sam Haggerty had surgery to repair a groin injury sustained late last season, but has started full baseball activity. Relief pitcher Andrés Muñoz had foot surgery but should pitch during spring training, and Dipoto said former first-round draft pick Evan White is fully healthy after two-plus seasons of dealing with injuries.

Justice Department: MLB antitrust exemption should be narrow

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—The U.S. Justice Department asked a federal appeals court to narrowly consider Major League Baseball's antitrust exemption, a filing made in a case involving four eliminated minor league teams hoping to end the sport's century-old legal protection.

MLB cut the minimum guaranteed minor league affiliation agreements from 160 to 120 in September 2020 and took over running the minors from the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, which had been in charge since 1901.

The parent companies of the Staten Island Yankees, Tri-City ValleyCats, Salem-Keizer Volcanoes and Norwich Sea Unicorns sued MLB in December 2021 in U.S. District Court in Manhattan, alleging a violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act caused by "a horizontal agreement between competitors that has artificially reduced and capped output in the market for MiLB teams affiliated with MLB clubs."

The suit was dismissed in October by a judge who cited the antitrust exemption created by a 1922 U.S. Supreme Court decision involving the Federal League. The teams then asked the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to send the case onto the Supreme Court.

"The court need not resolve the exemption's precise contours," the Justice Department wrote in a brief to the 2nd Circuit filed Monday by Assistant Attorney General Jonathan S. Kanter and several other lawyers. "The United States therefore does not take a position on whether the exemption applies here. Instead, the United States files this brief to reaffirm, as the Supreme Court has said, that courts should 'not extend' the Federal Baseball exemption."

After the case was filed, MLB moved to dismiss while citing the sport's antitrust exemption, alleging lack of standing and claiming there was no antitrust violation.

U.S. District Judge Andrew L. Carter ruled on Oct. 26 that the minor league teams had standing and "had pleaded sufficient facts to show an actual adverse effect on competition in the identified market." But he dismissed the suit because of the antitrust exemption.

"Plaintiffs believe that the Supreme Court is poised to knock out the exemption, like a boxer waiting to launch a left hook after her opponent tosses out a torpid jab," Carter wrote. "It's possible. But until the Supreme Court or Congress takes action, the exemption survives; it shields MLB from plaintiffs' lawsuit."

The Supreme Court granted baseball an antitrust exemption in the Federal League case when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote that baseball was not interstate commerce but exhibitions exempt from antitrust laws. The Supreme Court reaffirmed the decision in a 1953 case involving New York Yankees farmhand George Toolson and in the 1972 Curt Flood decision, saying any changes should come from Congress.

A 1998 law applied antitrust laws to MLB affecting the employment of major league players at the major league level.

"This court must, of course, apply controlling precedent even when it is wrong," the minor league teams wrote in a Jan. 9 brief to the 2nd Circuit. "But the court should, if it sees fit, dispatch this case to the Supreme Court with a message attached: Enough already."

No lease extension, but O's and governor tout partnership

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Baseball Writer

The Baltimore Orioles and Maryland Gov. Wes Moore announced a joint commitment to what they called a "multi-decade, public-private partnership" to revitalize the Camden Yards sports complex.

The statement from the team and the state's new governor came Wednesday, the deadline for the Orioles to exercise a one-time, five-year extension to their lease at Camden Yards. The team was not planning to exercise that option, according to a person with knowledge of the decision. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the club hadn't announced its decision.

With no extension, the lease is set to expire at the end of this year, but the team and the Maryland Stadium Authority can keep negotiating. Wednesday's joint release seemed to be an attempt to calm any nerves in Baltimore about the team's future.

"I am looking forward to continuing to collaborate with Governor Moore, his administration, and the Maryland Stadium Authority in order to bring to Baltimore the modern, sustainable, and electrifying sports and entertainment destination the state of Maryland deserves," Orioles CEO John Angelos said.

"We greatly appreciate Governor Moore's vision and commitment as we seize the tremendous opportunity to redefine the paradigm of what a Major League Baseball venue represents and thereby revitalize downtown Baltimore. It is my hope and expectation that, together with Governor Moore and the new members and new chairman of the MSA board, we can again fully realize the potential of Camden Yards to serve as a catalyst for Baltimore's second renaissance."

Republican Larry Hogan, the state's previous governor, signed a bill last year increasing bond authorization for M&T Bank Stadium, home of the Baltimore Ravens, and Camden Yards. The measure allowed borrowing of up to $600 million for each stadium.

"When Camden Yards opened 30 years ago, the Baltimore Orioles revolutionized baseball and set the bar for the fan experience," Moore, a Democrat, said Wednesday. "We share the commitment of the Orioles organization to ensuring that the team is playing in a world-class facility at Camden Yards for decades to come and are excited to advance our public-private partnership."

Angelos recently reaffirmed that the Orioles would stay in Baltimore, although he dressed down a reporter who asked for more clarity on the future of the team's ownership situation. Angelos was sued last year by his brother Lou, who claimed John Angelos seized control of the Orioles at his expense.

Mantas blast past Eagles in boys HS hoops

LEIGH GASES
Saipan Southern High School's Christian Lucero attempts a layup during their game against Grace Christian Academy in the 2022-2023 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Southern High School Manta Rays boys basketball varsity team blasted through the Grace Christian Academy Eagles varsity, 62-24, during the 2022-2023 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League on Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Mantas' Elijah Garcia started the game with a field goal and was fouled right after, with teammates John Kae Raquepo and Christian Lucero adding two shots each.

The Eagles took some time to get the wheels in their offense going, with 6 of their 10 points in the first half made solely from fouls shots.

Garcia and Lucero capitalized as the tandem took turns shooting aggressively from the paint—with Garcia sinking a deep one for an extra 3 points and a 10-16 game. The Eagles still had the brakes on their offense as the Mantas kept them at bay with their strong defense.

The Mantas also kept their explosive offense coming, as Rasg Asuo stepped in and lengthened the gap in the first half. By the end of it, the Mantas were on the moon with their 36 points made by Garcia, Raquepo, Lucero, and Asuo.

In the second half, the Eagles still couldn't get their footing and handle on the ball, as they didn't have many good shots from the perimeter—with their points coming from fouls once again. Ryan Daproza was fouled back to back and shot 5 free throws after he scored 3 free throws in the first half.

The Eagles' Julian Taitano, Kent Ouyang, Eric Lai, and Steven Adriatico managed to shoot 2 points each, with their last score a free throw made by Heman Addy. At the end of the second half, the Eagles put up 14 points as they were drowned out by the bombardment of shots from the Mantas lineup with 34 points.

After their game, the Kagman High School Ayuyus varsity team took a shot against the Agape Christian School Torchbearers and won, 48-30.

The Ayuyus' Frankie Satur and Lucio Aldan both took the team home with a double-digit game of 18 and 17 points, respectively, as their teammates assisted on the defensive to shut down the Torchbearers' attacks on the basket.

The Torchbearers were reduced to only 12 points in the first half and 18 points in the second, led by Caleb Cui's 10 points.

In the junior varsity games earlier in the afternoon, MHS JV and MHS JV-2 went head to head, with a win for the JV team, 25-20; and the KHS JV defeated the Mount Carmel School Knights JV, 21-13.

In the varsity standings, MCS leads with a 2-0 record; SSHS is 1-0; ACS is at 1-2; KHS and MHS are at 1-0 each; GCA has no wins yet with 0-3; and SIS is 0-1.

In the junior varsity standings, MHS and KHS JV are both undefeated at 2-0; MHS JV-2 is at 1-2; SSHS JV is at 1-1; and MCS JV have yet to win with 0-3.

SSHS 62 – Asuo 14, Garcia and Raquepo 12, Lucero 10, Addy 4, Konman and Pangelinan 3, Defang and Charley 2.

GCA 24 – Daproza 8, Ouyang 4, Taitano 3, Adriatico, Jones, and Lai 2.

Scoring by halves: 36-10; 62-24.

KHS 48 – Satur 18, Aldan 17, Ortiz 8, Hocog 3, Diaz 2.

ACS 30 – Cui 10, Li 6, Luo and Ye 5, Ma and Wang 2.

Scoring by halves: 24-12; 48-30.

Blue Haus leads 3 teams into playoffs; 2 to contest last spot

MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Undefeated Blue Haus will be joined in the playoffs by Chang Ming Market and JTM Saipan, while NAPA Auto Parts and Pacific Best Choice will have a one-game playoff for the last spot in the open division of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League.

Blue Haus completed the regular season with a perfect 9-0 mark after brushing aside Padrinos Tuesday Club, 89-79, last Sunday at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

The top seed in the Final Four wasted no time and immediately doubled Padrinos Tuesday Club in the opening quarter, 32-16, before settling for a 55-34 spread at halftime.

Padrinos Tuesday Club made a game of in the third as Blue Haus relaxed a bit before doing just enough at the endgame to carve out the 10-point win.

Douglas "Spider" Schmidt again led Blue Haus with 28 points, while Brandon Talania and Kelvin Fitial added 16 and 14 markers, respectively.

John Wijangco paced Padrinos Tuesday Club in its fifth loss in nine games with 24 points with Mike Aparte and Joel Javier tossing in 19 and 15 points.

In the only other match played last weekend, Pacific Best Choice caught NAPA Auto Parts in a tie for fourth place after routing Marianas Health Services, 70-54.

Pacific Best Choice couldn't really shake off MHS in the first half, but gained some distance against the already eliminated team at the start of the second half and eventually won by 16 points.

Brian Natividad sizzled all game long for Pacific Best Choice with 23 points, while Lionel Ibe was the high-point man with 19 markers for MHS, which dropped to 4-5.

In other games, NAPA Auto Parts secured the knockout game against Pacific Best Choice after its walkover win over Vizion Insurance (2-7). Also winning by forfeit were Pepoy's Rest Cafe (2-7) and Chang Ming Market (8-1) after Al-Ger Manpower (0-9) and JTM Saipan (6-3) players didn't even bother to show up.

The NAPA Auto Parts-Pacific Best Choice one-game knockout match is set for this Sunday starting at 9am at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

MARK RABAGO
Blue Haus' Reymark Castro drives against a Padrinos Tuesday Club defender during the open division game in the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League last Sunday at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

Blue Haus 89 – Schmidt 28, Talania 16, Fitial 14, N. Mateo 9, Castro 8, Esdrelon 7, D. Mateo 7.

Padrinos Tuesday Club 79 – Wijangco 24, Aparte 19, Javier 15, Agustin 8, Mamaril 8, Rivera 5.

Scoring by quarters: 32-16, 55-34, 73-60, 89-79.

Pacific Best Choice 70 – Natividad 23, Chua 11, Bobades 8, Isip 6, Hipolito 6, Camacho 5, Hernandez 4, Augusto 3, Palermo 2, Ramas 2.

Marianas Health Services 54 – Ibe 19, Cruz 9, Sapo 8, Saplan 8, Ogarto 5, Ramon 3, Ulloa 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-14, 37-30, 56-41, 70-54.

NMI

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all the lessons they will learn from the competition to get even better.

"Sending our players to off-island competitions is part of the NMBA's efforts to continue the development of the sport in the NMI and provide opportunities for players and officials involved in the program. Being able to see and experience what the competition is like outside the NMI will give them the idea how to work on their games to catch or level up with their counterparts," Tolentino said.

As for the three coaches, the NMBA said the course will be very helpful as when they return to Saipan they will be better equipped with the tools needed to deliver badminton lessons and share their knowledge to aspiring coaches. ***(PR)***

PALACIOS

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ing for me last Sunday was to get a good start and just ride my race and just ride like its practice," said Palacios.

The Dandan Middle School student was able to fend off Camacho and Rasa by using the aforementioned good start in the Marianas Racing Association January race.

"I just had to get a good start and then I started pulling away little by little. I am dedicating this win to my team and to my family and I just want to say thank you to all the people who have helped me throughout my racing career," said Palacios, who swapped out his old crf150 for his new yz250f.

" It is a bigger bike and it has more power," he said.

In the Intermediate Class, Corry Pangelinan also made a perfect run in the 10-lap race for 50 points. Henry Camacho Jr. was second with 42 points, while Melvin Cepeda was third with 40 points.

Nakoa Torres and Bentley Koshiro rode alone in the Peewee ATV and the Peewee I classes, respectively, and won the four-lap races without much effort.

MOST

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players we sent to it going on to compete in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji."

Qualifying automatically to Fiji were boys 16's Minsoo "David" Kwon, girls 16's Serin Chung and Savita Sikkel, boys 14's La Hunn Lam, Nason Wessel, Henry Choi, and Siwoo Lee, girls 14's Hoo Wang, Hannah Chae, and Anna Kwon, boys 12's Yutaka Kadokura, Ian Chae, Ryan Choi, and Jihun Park, and girls 12's Lina Tsukagoshi. Later, Irin Chung and June Yu were granted wildcard entries by the Oceania Tennis Federation to the POJC.

Race also said Sinclair also improved his ATP ranking from 700+ to around 450.

And a nice offshoot of the CNMI's hosting of the Mini Games last year, the tennis courts at the American Memorial Park underwent a much-needed makeover.

"As a legacy of the PMG we had our courts at AMP resurfaced, a benefit that will last several years," he said.

On the downside, Race said 2022 also saw the CNMI's very successful junior tennis program going into a forced hiatus due to lack of a training facility.

"The biggest challenge has been that our junior program has had to endure a major setback. In July 2022 the major tennis training program ended when no courts were available for training. The NMI's top priority needs to be the development of a national tennis training center," he said.

Race earlier lamented the downsizing of tennis courts from four to two for the planned $21.2-million makeover of the Oleai Sports Complex.

This, after the Office of Planning and Development changed the original plan and instead opted for only two International Tennis Federation tennis courts with associated facilities such as warm-up walls, fencing, and bleachers.

Jayson Tatum scores 31 points, NBA-leading Celtics rout Nets

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Sports

Mantas blast past Eagles in boys HS hoops

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PACIFIC U15 INVITATION TEAM CHALLENGE 2023

NMI debuts vs New Caledonia

The NMI Junior National Badminton Team is leaving Saipan for New Zealand this weekend to compete in the Pacific U15 Invitation Team Challenge 2023.

Bautista

Tsukagoshi

Malonzo

Mallari

Gragasin

Players Shaina Malonzo, Ruth Charmaine Bautista, Lina Tsukagoshi, Justin Gragasin, and Jude Mallari will be joined in Auckland by team manager and Northern Marianas Badminton Association general secretary Christy Villaflor. The young squad will have its first game on Feb. 10 against New Caledonia and they will play back-to-back matches on the opening day as they take on Tahiti next. Cook Islands, Guam, and Tonga are the other nations participating in the Pacific U15 Invitation Team Challenge 2023.

The five players made it to the junior national squad after undergoing a series of tryouts last year and training under Janelle Pangilinan, Nate Guerrero, and Ezekiel Macario. The three coaches are also part of the NMI delegation, as they will be attending a Badminton World Federation Level 1 Coaching Course that will coincide with the team competition, which will be held at the Massey University.

"We are excited for our young players as this will be their first time to play off-island in a badminton competition. Our players have significantly improved since they joined the tryouts and it also helped that they played in the interscholastic league. They are doing well in our training sessions and we hope that will translate into good games when they go out there and compete," Pangilinan said.

After challenging New Caledonia and Tahiti on opening day, the NMI junior players will face Tonga and Cook Islands on Feb. 11, while their last match in the round-robin competition will be against Guam on Feb. 12.

"Since this is our first time to compete in this kind of tournament, our focus is to play our game and keep in mind the things and techniques that our coaches have been teaching us in our practice sessions," Mallari said.

Meanwhile, NMBA president Merlie Tolentino wishes the NMI Junior National Badminton Team good luck and encourages them to represent the islands well on and off the badminton court and take

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'Most exciting year ever for tennis in CNMI'

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president Jeff Race said 2022 was a banner year for tennis in the CNMI and not just because of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games.

The longtime CNMI national tennis coach proudly proclaimed that "2022 was the most exciting year ever for tennis in the CNMI in many ways."

Race said top billing goes to the three gold and one bronze medals won by the CNMI national tennis team in the quadrennial event.

Tennis contributed heavily in the U.S. territory's 16-gold, 13-silver, and nine-bronze medal haul in the Mini Games with ATP Tour veteran Colin Sinclair prevailing in the men's singles and teaming up with Robbie Schorr in the men's doubles finals win. Sinclair, Schorr, Bobby Cruz, and Colin Ramsey also topped the men's team event, while Sinclair and Isabel Heras finished third in the mixed doubles.

The CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee said 2022 also saw the CNMI's LaHunn Lam make history by becoming the youngest player ever to suit up in Wimbledon after the then 12-year-old took part in the inaugural U14 competition.

Race also said CNMI netters made their home islands proud by again dominating the North Pacific Regional Championships last July.

"Our juniors also had a fantastic NPRC with 17 of the 19

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MARK RABAGO

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president Jeff Race in action during the recent 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Palacios places first again in Novice Class

TISHA FERRER

Vicente "Beng" Palacios celebrates after winning the Novice Class in the 2023 Monster Energy Point Series Race last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Track.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

By the way Vicente "Beng" Palacios has been riding; he won't be in the Novice Class for long.

The 14-year-old again dominated the eight-lap Novice Class in last Sunday's 2023 Monster Energy Point Series Race at the Cowtown Race Track.

Palacios topped both heats en route to scoring 50 points. Christian Camacho was second with 44 points, while Ponce Rasa rounded out third with 40 points.

"It feels good to win the first race of the season and to have a great team to support me is great. What was work-

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